$9

# EZ

ARTS MAGAZINE

ISSUE I SPRING 1991

Photograph: Michael Lees

# SPECIAL OFFER TO OUR READERS

**6 posters for $38** (this includes postage and packing)

These beautiful posters were reproduced from the computer pictures of Dr. Mike Field of Sydney University by the Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers Inc. The making of these exquisite designs is described in 'When Art Computes' by April Hersey on pages 32 to 35 of the magazine.

We have arranged for these unusual posters, which normally sell for $100 for the set of six, to be offered to our readers at the very special price of $38 (including P & P).

Readers wishing to order sets may pay by cheque or money order made payable to Oz Arts Magazine, or by credit card (for Visa, Bankcard, Mastercard or American Express), using the order form below, or a photocopy of this form. If you do not wish to cut your copy of the first issue of our brand new magazine, simply write to us giving the essential information. And don't forget to include your name and address!

Send the order form to **Oz Arts Magazine, Private Bag 5, Wentworth Falls 2782, or fax to (047) 57 3797.**

Please send me _____ set(s) of the Oz Arts Special Computer Designs Posters. I enclose cheque/money order for $38 per set, OR please charge my

Visa / Bankcard / Mastercard / American Express

*(Please circle which card):*

Card No. _____

Expiry Date: _____

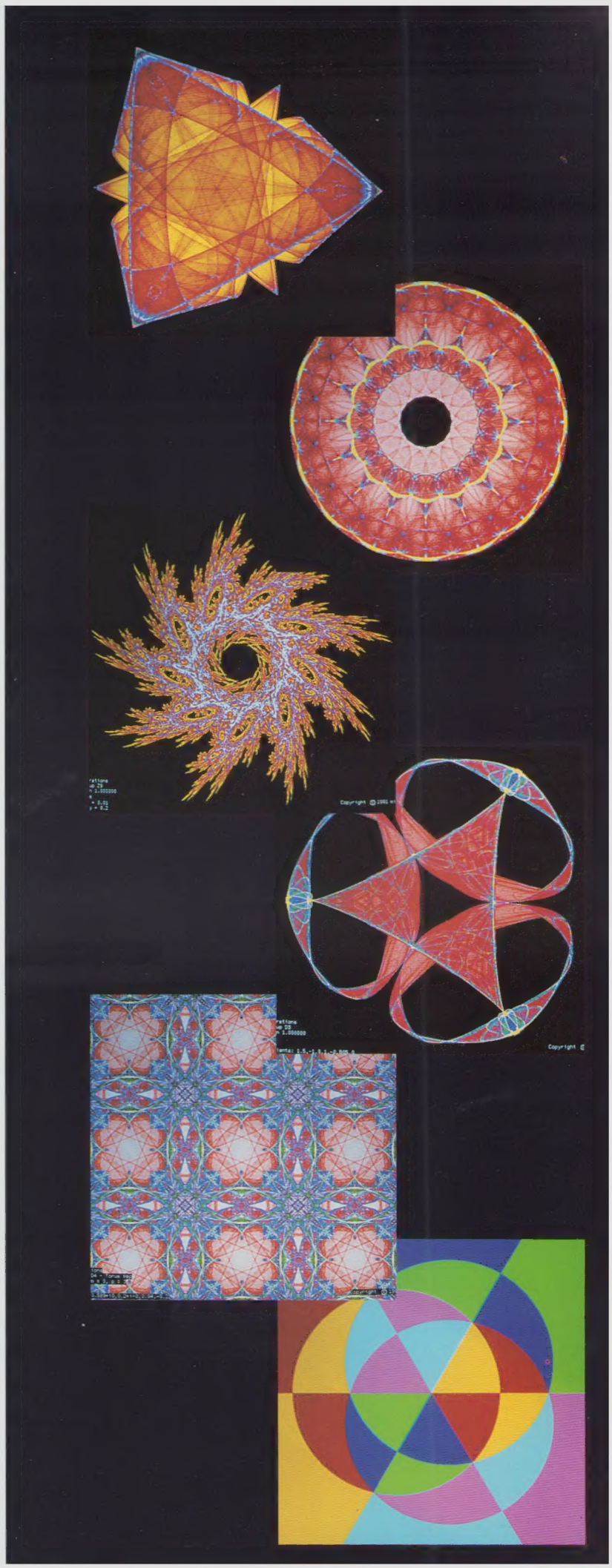
Signature: _____

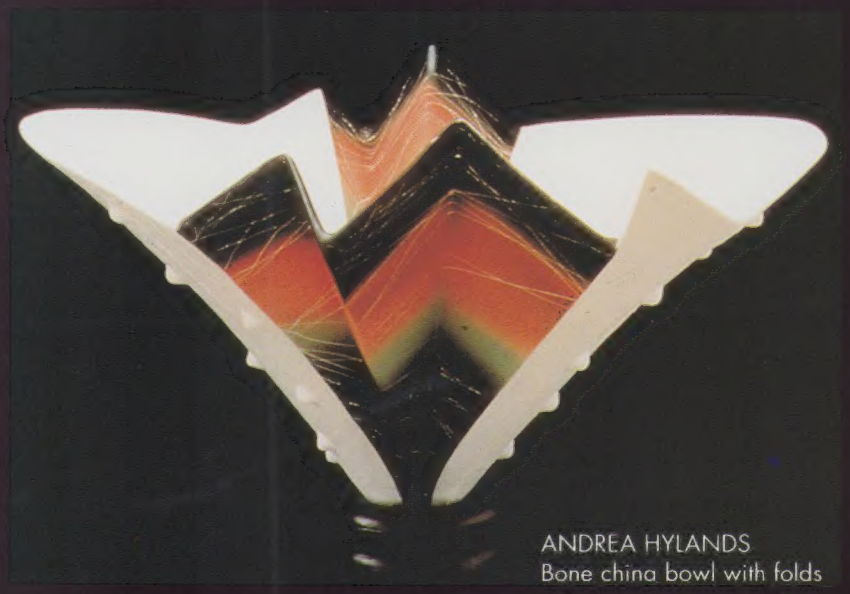
Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____





ANDREA HYLANDS
Bone china bowl with folds

**AUSTRALIAN CRAFTS**
**retailing at**
**OUT OF HAND ON 7**
**David Jones, Sydney**

**A project of the**
**Crafts Council of Australia**
**35 George Street**
**The Rocks, Sydney NSW 2000**
**Australia**
**Tel: 61 2 241 1701**
**Fax: 61 2 247 6143**

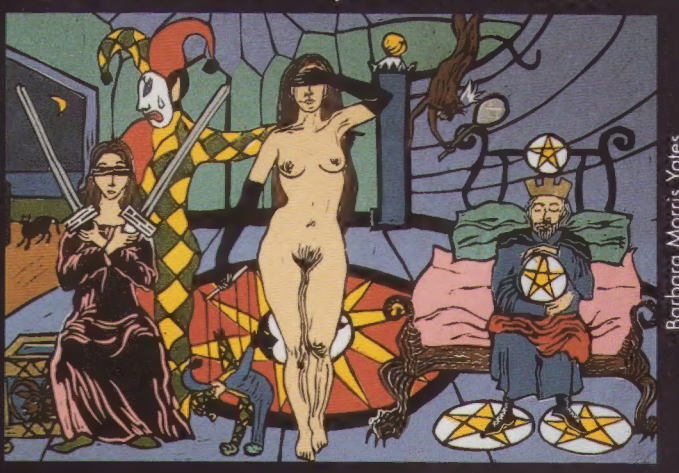
# Ceramics
## Art and Perception

A full colour quarterly magazine on all aspects of ceramic art

Ceramics • Art • Aesthetics • Contemporary • Reviews • History
Philosophy • New Techniques • Exhibitions • Opinion • Ceramics
in Architecture • Events • Sculpture • International • Function
Installations • Gallery • Public Art • Interviews • Criticism

**Subscribe now to Ceramics: Art and Perception**
**35 William Street, Paddington NSW 2021 Australia**
**Tel: 02 361 5286 Fax 02 361 5402**
**Subscription rate (airmail): US$46 A$44 UK£22 DM78 SF70 ¥6000**

*"A fool and his money are soon parted..."*



Barbara Morris Yates

Our wise readers, on the other hand, will be sending gift subscriptions of Oz Arts magazine to lovers, family and friends at home and overseas this Christmas.

# CONTENTS


**EDITORIAL** 4
**EXPORTING AUSTRALIAN CRAFTS** April Hersey 5
**ART ON THE ROCKS** Caroline Baum 7
**STUART DEVLIN** Paul Kriwaczek 11
**ARTHUR McINTYRE** Bronwyn Watson 16
**FASCINATING AIDA** Peter Timms 23
**Opinion - GOOD TASTE: BAD TASTE** Brian Phipps 26
**WHEN ART COMPUTES** April Hersey 32
**ANANGU WOODCARVING** Jennifer Isaacs 36
**ABORIGINAL WOMEN ARTISTS** Marie Geissler 39
**COLLECTING ART AND ANTIQUES** Marie Geissler 42
**SIR TOM AND THE ARTISTS OF THE ROUND TABLE** Nadine Amadio 50
**MOET AND CHANDON** Marie Geissler 54
**CREATIVE RETREATS:** 60
**A Residency at Varuna** - Michael Sharkey; 61
**Tokyo Studio** - Vivienne Binns; 62
**Australian Artists in Italy** - Jennifer Isaacs 64
**Paris Retreat** - Antoni Jach; 66
**GRACE COSSINGTON SMITH** April Hersey 68
**PEGGY GLANVILLE-HICKS AND THE MAKING OF THE FILM** Nadine Amadio 70
**INGA'S IMPERIUM** - Inga Hunter 76
**AN EXPRESSION OF ENCHANTMENT: STAINED GLASS IN AUSTRALIA** Nadine Amadio 80
**BROKEN HILL, WINTER** A poem by Tony Scanlon 81
**CALENDAR** 82
**THE SCULPTURE OF ANISH KAPOOR** Victoria Hynes 84
**Discussion - CAN THE ARTS BE UNIONISED?** April Hersey 87
**KATE LLEWELLYN AT THE CAMEL FAIR** 89
**THE SCRIBE'S DAUGHTER** A poem by Debbie Westbury 92
**REVIEWS**
**DESIGN AFTER MODERNISM** Beth Hatton 93
**LETTERS** 94
**BRIEFS** 95
**BOOK REVIEW** 96
**MUSIC REVIEW** 97
**CLASSIFIEDS** 98

A R T S MAGAZINE

**ISSUE 1 OCTOBER/DECEMBER 1991**

ISSN 1037-1311

**Publisher:** Carolynne Skinner

**Editor:** April Hersey

**Graphic design:** Helen Keogh Graphic Design

**Editorial and advertising:**
Tel: (047) 57 4001
Fax: (047) 57 3797

Designed and produced in Australia.
Colour separations and printing by Dai Nippon.
Trade Distribution: Network Distribution Co.

© Oz Arts magazine

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Original contributions are welcomed but naturally place the publisher under no obligation. A stamped addressed envelope must be enclosed if the contributor requires material to be returned. The publisher does not accept responsibility for loss or damage.

The opinions expressed in Oz Arts magazine are not necessarily those of the publisher. The publisher also cannot accept responsibility for the authenticity or accuracy of material published, although every effort is made to ensure that it is factually correct.

Single copies posted to Australian addresses
$11 ($9 plus postage and packing)

**Subscriptions:**
Annual - $36 for 4 issues Australia-wide;
$48 surface overseas; and
$68 airmail overseas.

All correspondence, including subscriptions, should be addressed to:

**Oz Arts magazine,**
**Private bag 5,**
**Wentworth Falls 2782.**
**Tel: (047) 57 4001**
**Fax: (047) 57 3797.**

Subscription requests with payment by credit card (Bankcard, Visa, Mastercard and American Express) may be faxed (use the subscription order form inside this issue). Similarly, classified advertising with payment by credit card may be faxed to us on the form included in this magazine in order to save time.

**Cover photography:** Hamish Ta-mé

# EDITORIAL

In welcoming you to *Oz Arts* I feel I should first of all pay a brief tribute to the man who has made the explosion of the arts across Australia possible - ex Prime Minister Gough Whitlam. Although the first steps towards the Australia Council were made in John Gorton's time, it was Whitlam's infusion of money into the arts in 1973, and the setting up of the boards of the Australia Council that made possible the incredible surge of creativity that we now see on every side.

The Australia Council has deservedly had good press and bad press over the years but there is no doubt that Gough Whitlam's opening of the public purse to the arts provided a catalyst for our great leap forward. The establishment of state Ministries for the Arts followed and possibilities became astonishing for a population previously starved of exposure to all forms of Australian creative talent.

Now Australia has a $14 billion arts industry directly employing 200,000 people, an industry engaged in research and development like any other.

*Oz Arts* intends to be the voice of that industry. As an Australia-wide commercial publication covering all the arts, we have the opportunity to show Australian creativity not only to our own people, but also to sell it to the world.

Until now there has not been one surviving publication representing all the arts. There have been many small publications covering specific topics and there have been a few general magazines tied to universities or cultural organisations, and some excellent regional papers, but they only provide a chorus of whispers when what is needed is one distinct voice. *Oz Arts* will provide that clear unbiased voice.

*Oz Arts* is a private endeavour, funded by publisher Carolynne Skinner, that rarest of rare beings in Australia - someone prepared to support an arts project from her own purse.

This magazine is intended for all of us, whether we know a great deal about the arts, or nothing at all - though it would be difficult to find an Australian who can claim to have no knowledge of the arts after the last two decades. No-one can have escaped the ubiquity of community art, the access of arts training through the schools and the upsurge of blockbuster and travelling exhibitions in the recent past. Even those who remain untouched by the visual arts and unmoved by the crafts and sculpture will not have missed out entirely on literature, theatre, film, videos and music of all kinds.

In every Australian life, either directly, or indirectly through children and grandchildren, there is now some close contact with the lively arts. And this will increase. The survey *Megatrends 2000 - The Next Ten Years* by *John Naisbitt* and *Patricia Aburdene,* predicts that one of the big trends of the 1990s will be in the field of the arts.

So welcome to *Oz Arts!* Read our stories. Be inspired, or disagree and tell us so. Help us, through discussion and information, to be as lively a magazine as the incredible arts industry now flourishing in Australia which we are determined to serve well.

**April Hersey**
**Editor**

# EXPORTING
# australian crafts

***Guido Gouveneur:*** *Hand forged steel, lyre arm chair, Dali candelabra.*

***Left: David Williams:*** *Crystalline ceramic vase.*

***Below: Helmut Leuckenhausen:*** *Another heir, table in Huon pine.*

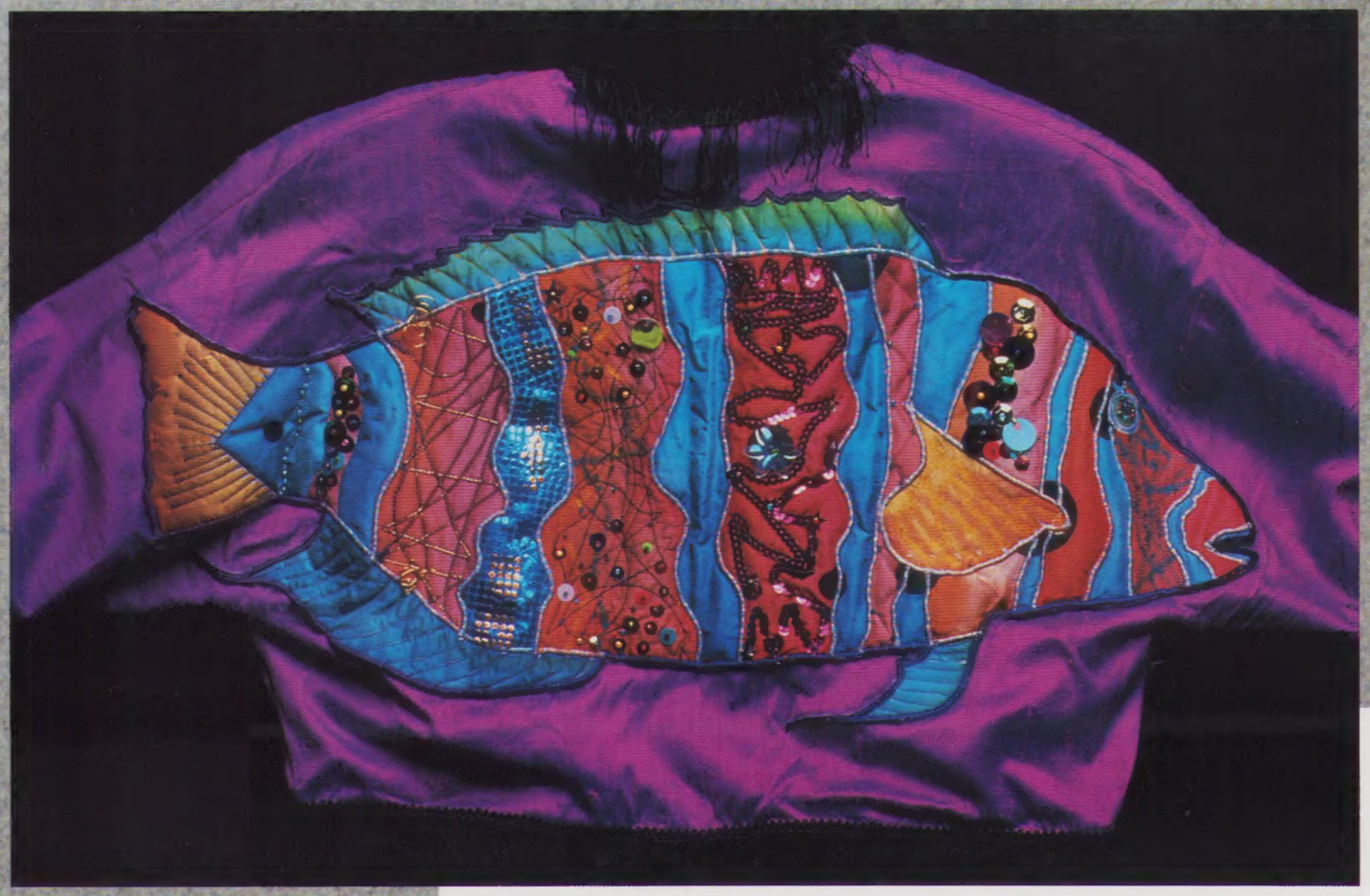
Of all the plethora of arts organisations whirling about in Australia today there is one that is extraordinary - the **Crafts Council of Australia.**

The Crafts Council was the first runner in the whole arts scene. Craftspeople were lobbying Canberra for funds for the establishment of a Crafts Council before the Australia Council was even in an embryo state, and the first board of the Australia Council when it was formed was the Crafts Board, firmly established on the underpinning of the Crafts Council.

There have been few arts initiatives in Australia since that time which have not benefitted from the successful blueprint of the Crafts Council. Separate state councils were established. Information and resource centres were set up.

Publishing of books, reports, surveys and a successful magazine were all part of the Crafts Council's strategy. All these initiatives were backed by committees of hands-on craftspeople or by consultants from the same grass-roots backgrounds - presenting a formidable and powerful voice for Australian craftspeople.

Jane Burns, General Manager of the Crafts Council of Australia, has been its chief executive since the door in the old King Street building in Sydney first opened for business in 1972. A great deal of the success of the Crafts Council is directly attributable to her overview and the way in which she has always deferred to the craftspeople themselves and followed their needs in directing the Council.



***Right: Lizzid Silks jacket:*** *Painted by Liz Wauchope, sewn by Tiffany Ollis.*

***Below: Setsuko Oyishi:*** *Singing breeze, glass.*

***Nick Doslov:*** *Bound books.*

It is estimated that there are now nearly 3,000 professional craftspeople in Australia and that their capacity for serving our arts industry is more than $28 million.

As early as 1981 the Crafts Council was aware of the need for Australian craftspeople to open markets overseas. That was the year of their first Craft Expo. Nine more followed in both Melbourne and Sydney until 1987 when lack of funds forced the Council out of the expo field.

This year they came back in association with XPO Exhibitions Index with Interfex New Art Forms Expo '91 held recently at Darling Harbour in Sydney. At this latest Expo, the Council showed just what Australian craftspeople can offer - a sophisticated melange of ceramics, woodwork, furniture, jewellery, glass, painted fabrics and bookbinding.

The Expo was a success and attracted both trade buyers and the general public, though the venue at Darling Harbour was rather too vast to effectively show the subtleties of fine craft pieces. Stage designer Tim Cobin was hampered by the draconian rules of the authorities at Darling Harbour as to what he could put where but created an airy pavilion for the crafts.

This kind of successful exhibition and market is only one of the Crafts Council's strategies for showing Australian creativity to the world. There is an ongoing series of initiatives including the promotion of awareness of this aspect of Australian culture at overseas arts fairs and other recurrent events.

A study of the U.S. market has already been undertaken by the Crafts Council of Australia and it is hoped to follow this up with a study of the European and Asian markets.

The Crafts Council also intends to list consultants and export firms who will be able to liaise directly with Australian craftspeople and offer expert information on international markets so that the craft item offered will have every chance of selling, because it will have been exported to the right place, with most of the guesswork eliminated.

Additionally, the Crafts Council plans to establish an **Export Register Listing** which will give up-to-date information on individuals wishing to export their craftworks, as well as the names of agents and galleries who are interested in establishing overseas connections.

**April Hersey**

# ART ON THE ROCKS

## Museum of Contemporary Art

Some people have decided to abbreviate the **Museum of Contemporary Art** to MOCA instead of MCA, which seems to suggest that while it may not be everyone's cup of tea, it has been adopted by café society.

Argument over the Museum's name is just the tip of the iceberg: even before it opened its doors, the Museum of Contemporary Art was caught up in controversy. It is not the works of art in its collection which have caused the debate, but the acrimonious split between the Museum and its parent body, the Power Institute of Fine Arts.

When he died in 1943, John Power bequeathed $3.5 million for teaching, collecting and exhibiting art. For many years, the Power gallery and its collection (which languished in storage for more than 20 years) were intimately connected with the Power Department of Fine Arts at Sydney University. Senior academics have strongly opposed the collection's relocation to the Maritime Services Board building in its spectacular location at Circular Quay. They fear that the move will minimise academic input into the collection and turn the gallery into a tourist trap.

Frankly, that is the least of the Museum's worries. The more tourists they attract the better, particularly given that the Museum is intended to become self-supporting and receives only state government funding of $50,000 for its first three years. In the past few months, its Director Leon Paroissien and its Chairman, Geoffrey Cousins have been selling the Museum to the corporate sector in order to avoid, as one commentator put it, 'being stuck between the Rocks and a hard financial place'.

So far, despite the recession, the response has been enthusiastic, with potential sponsors and patrons attracted by the unique quality of the venture. The MCA is promoting the world class quality of its international collection and a dynamic approach to culture. Its mission statement says that its intention is 'to create with energy and innovative thinking a visual arts hot-spot in synergy with its surrounds ... to make available to the people of New South Wales, Australia and the world the latest ideas and theories in visual culture, and in so doing declare that this society is vital, courageous and celebratory of the human adventure'.

Passionate sentiments, expressed perhaps a little more wearily by Paroissien in his stark white office next door to the MCA, still being refurbished by Andrew Andersons.

An almost gaunt, reedy man, Paroissien has been a curator of the Power collection since 1984, together with Bernice Murphy, now senior curator of the MCA. His expertise in the art world extends well beyond the borders of Australia and he is already developing a global network of curators, from Santiago to Berlin, to work with the MCA on future programs.

Paroissien (the name is French and means *parishioner*) is not afraid of controversy, although he would rather it focused on art than on politics. So that when asked which are the icons of the Power collection which will draw the tourists into the MCA, he replies provocatively: 'There are no icons in twentieth century art. Even when it

*George Street facade (Peddle Thorp Architects)*

comes to Picasso, I would defy anyone to name the greatest of his works. The same is true of Warhol and Pollock: **Blue Poles** may be considered an icon here, but that is only for peripheral reasons. An expert would not hold it up as the artist's masterpiece. The twentieth century is not like the Renaissance, it's not about the creation of a single work, it's about plurality.'

His personal favourites in the collection are Georg Baselitz's **Der Dichter** (*The Poet*) and Juan Davila's **Fable of Australian Art.**

As for attracting tourists, that is not a priority that Paroissien places any higher than attracting the locals. 'It is now a well recognised fact that the best tourist sites in the world are places that do not attract only tourists. We want residents of Sydney and all Australians to visit the MCA.' Paroissien refuses to disclose how he plans to make its somewhat austere exterior welcoming, but says: 'We will be staging events around and over the building to suggest that we are an integral part of contemporary culture and that the MCA is part of the city.'

Certainly, once inside, the visitor will be impressed by the scale and stature of the art deco building's space: the major gallery areas are huge barrel vaulted areas, separated by fixed walls rather than temporary partitions. 'Palace architecture is highly suited to contemporary art', explains Paroissien, poring over the plans. 'Think of how wonderful works look in the Louvre and the Hermitage. Andrew Andersons has not changed the fabric of the building, but has added wonderful touches like perforating the inner building at corners and other strategic places so that you can look out across the water but not be distracted by the view.'

When it opens, the MCA will display most of the 4,000 works in its collection, including works by Beuys, Lichtenstein, Rauschenberg, Paladino, Vasarely and Tinguely. Thereafter, the public will see only a portion of the collection, supplemented by an ambitious program of up to 20 special exhibitions a year. 'We plan to operate along the lines of a European *'kunsthalle'*, so we will be very much project-based', says Paroissien.

One of the earliest exhibitions will be devoted to that great Aussie phenomenon, the caravan. The MCA has commissioned Australian and foreign designers to redesign the Australian caravan and has persuaded manufacturers to make up prototypes which will be displayed on the Circular Quay forecourt. A drawcard, but one that perhaps suggests the Powerhouse more than the Power collection.

Other plans for the first year of exhibitions include **TV Times,** a show examining 35 years of television in Australia; **Challenge to Colonialism,** an exhibition of work by five contemporary Aboriginal artists, and a show of work by Lyndal Jones, the first in a continuing series to be mounted from the Contemporary Art Archive. Conceived in close collaboration with Jones as an 'archival' presentation of her ten-year project of performance and installation works, **The Prediction Pieces** feature ten pieces each represented in the exhibition by two large archival boxes; one contains original materials (writings, costumes, transparencies, props etc.) while the other contains reproducible items for hand-on research by visitors to the exhibition.

What the exhibitions calendar does not feature are the kind of epic shows seen at institutions like MOMA (Museum of Modern Art) in New York and throughout Europe. Paroissien cites two reasons for this: 'The era of the blockbuster is over, world-wide, and contemporary art is not the subject of blockbusters. We are not aiming at queues out the door', says Paroissien, who is in fact aiming for 400,000 visitors a year - about the same number as visit the Australian National Gallery in Canberra.

'Research has shown that the public increasingly prefers shows which have some kind of solid research and serious concepts and ideas behind them. Blockbusters have declined because the public has become increasingly discriminating and wants an educational experience. Because the MCA has been created out of a university-based bequest, we are ideally placed to provide that.'

Paroissien's definitions of 'art' and 'contemporary' give him plenty of flexibility. As well as the traditional art forms, the MCA will embrace video, TV, performance, acoustic art and design, 'but with an emphasis on the processes of design rather than on showing paradigm objects - that is the role of the Powerhouse - we are more interested in the ideas behind the object'.

His definition of 'contemporary' is elastic, stretching from 20 years down to five, 'but our name deliberately juxtaposes 'museum', which suggests the past, with 'contemporary', which states the present, so that we can have our cake and eat it. I would have no

***Opposite page: Vivienne Shark Lewitt***
*Shall I bark for you master? Or shall I bite? ha, ha, ha, ha*
*1987 oil on linen canvas*

***Above: John Power***
*(Self portrait) circa 1920s - 1930s oil on canvas*

***Keith Haring*** *Untitled. 1982*
*synthetic polymer paint on vinyl tarpaulin with aluminium eyelets*

objection to including Goya in a show if his work were currently relevant or if there was a new interpretation of his contribution. The contemporary aspect of the MCA will always be shifting, but with the permanent collection as a background'.

But even the permanent collection will change. For the moment, it is heavily orientated towards European and American art, but Paroissien intends to focus increasingly on this side of the world through the MCA's acquisitions. 'We will be stating our position on the doorstep of Asia', he affirms, adding that he has a particular interest in making connections with that other colonial culture of our faraway neighbours in Latin America - hence the dialogue with curators in Santiago. We can, says Paroissien, expect shows devoted to aspects of contemporary Chinese art, and art from New Zealand, including Maori works. Meanwhile the collection has been gradually reorientating itself towards its own culture, with a strengthening of Aboriginal art, particularly with works from Arnhemland.

This year the MCA will not be purchasing, but Paroissien hopes within three years to have achieved his target of $5 million as annual spending money. This compares with the Australian National Gallery's acquisitions budget of approximately $3.6 million, but as Paroissien points out, the philosophy is different. 'For example, in collecting Australian art, we are looking to place Australian artists alongside their foreign counterparts, but we are not trying to be encyclopaedic - that is the role of the state galleries. Nor do we intend to compete with them - that's not our role. There should be room for everyone: in New York, the Metropolitan collects contemporary art but no-one suggests that it is competing with MOMA, the Guggenheim or the Whitney', says Paroissien, diplomatically dismissing the rumours of a frosty relationship with Edmund Capon, the high-profile director of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, with a vague assurance that their two institutions may in fact collaborate on some projects.

One particularly distinctive aspect of Paroissien's approach is his desire to actively involve artists in the life of the MCA, in a way that few, if any, other galleries in Australia are equipped to do. 'It will be a common occurrence for artists to work here, in residencies. Eventually, I would like us to have a studio space available, but in the meantime, we will employ artists to register the collection, to work on installations, even as attendants, if they want to', says Paroissien with an elusive, thin smile.

Outside his office, a board counts down the number of weeks till the opening, but Paroissien appears calm, if exhausted. After years of planning, he will soon be able to share his vision with the public. Meanwhile, the opening night bash remains as under wraps as a work by Christo. They probably won't be serving coffee, but whatever cocktail is concocted for the occasion, you can be sure it will be served 'on the rocks'.

**Caroline Baum**

# Stuart Devlin

**Below: Stuart Devlin** *and his stately home - Southbourne Court*

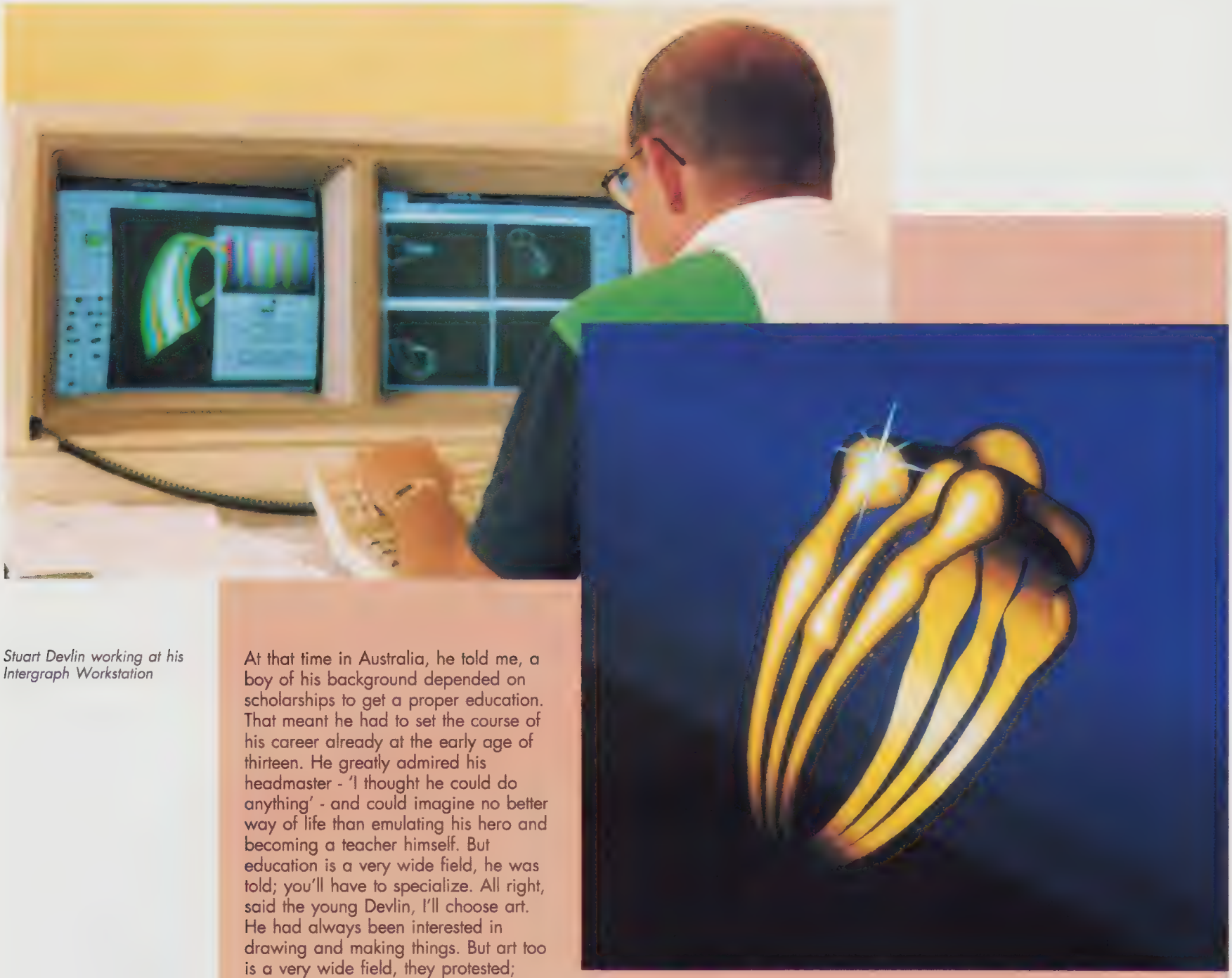
To find **Stuart Devlin,** you have to drive south of London, through leafy lanes between green hills dotted with sheep, past old pubs and thatched cottages. It is a version of the English countryside which could have inspired the illustrations in a thousand children's story books - a long way and very different from Devlin's first British workshop and home in a grey and grimy street of terraced shops and houses in London's light industrial district of Clerkenwell. Southbourne Court, where he now lives and works, is a rather grand though not very old country mansion, surrounded by a beautiful rose garden. It bears no name or number plate. If you don't know what you are looking for, you would never find it.

He wasn't expecting me when I arrived; he had forgotten that I was coming - at 60, Stuart Devlin no longer has to keep a constant eye on his appointment diary. But once reminded of who I was, and what I wanted, I was invited into a house whose every aspect is a reminder of its owner's forty years of creative work in sculpture, metalwork and furniture design. From the brass knob on the front door to the furniture inside, the Stuart Devlin style is unmistakable. Devlin chairs, tables and cabinets grace the rooms, Devlin sculptures stand everywhere.

He tells me that he has never before in his life lived anywhere other than in a city centre. And it was only a few years ago that he made the break from London. But his pattern of life was changing and so were his needs. At the height of his London success his company employed some 60 people. As he slowly moved from making to designing and consulting, his workforce shrank and he no longer needed manufacturing premises. Now he is assisted only by his wife and the man who was his former workshop manager, who - he says - today spends most of his time in the garden.

But Devlin himself is as busy as ever: designing, giving masterclasses at Goldsmith's Hall and - what takes up so much of his time today - working on his computer. He says that he is on his third career. 'I've had one career in education, another career in design, a sort of semi-career in sculpture in the middle and now it's really technology. But one tends to carry along the kind of things one has always been doing.'

I first wanted to know what had brought the poor boy from Geelong in Australia all the way to such a grand house in the English Home Counties. What, for instance, had led him to work in gold and silver in the first place.



*Stuart Devlin working at his Intergraph Workstation*

At that time in Australia, he told me, a boy of his background depended on scholarships to get a proper education. That meant he had to set the course of his career already at the early age of thirteen. He greatly admired his headmaster - 'I thought he could do anything' - and could imagine no better way of life than emulating his hero and becoming a teacher himself. But education is a very wide field, he was told; you'll have to specialize. All right, said the young Devlin, I'll choose art. He had always been interested in drawing and making things. But art too is a very wide field, they protested; what aspect of art will you specialize in? 'So, sort of almost at random,' he admits, 'I chose the strongest craft area available in my school at the time - art metalwork.'

Devlin succeeded in his studies, went to art school at the age of 17 and was teaching by 19. In 1952, he went to study at the RCA, the Royal College of Art in England, and then on to Columbia University in the USA. On his return to Austrlia he became an art teacher in Melbourne and it was at that time that he achieved his first public acclaim. He won the competition to design the first decimal coinage for Australia.

At first - he says - he was reluctant even to enter. 'I thought coins were such low relief designs, that they were better entrusted to graphic artists. But the graphic designers thought it was a job for a sculptor. They were right in the end. The fact that, however low the relief, coins aren't actually two dimensional makes a much bigger difference than you'd think.'

In spite of being rivals for the commission, all the entrants worked closely together, commenting, suggesting and criticising, to help each other with their designs. Devlin himself made the patterns for one of his rivals. He says the experience was a great lesson in co-operation. 'My first designs were terrible. I learned a tremendous amount from the others.' In the event, he recalls, Australia got the best coins in the world because of the way the competition was run.

Since 1965 when the new currency was released, he has gone on to design coinage for some 36 other countries. He is delighted to be active in that particular field. 'Coins are a very special kind of art,' he says. 'They're light, they're portable, everybody has them and they don't cost much.'

Ironically enough, it was after this first major artistic triumph that he finally reached the pinnacle of his teaching career. He was appointed Inspector of Art Schools in Victoria. Though it meant he was a success, he couldn't stand the job itself. 'It was the job one aimed one's career at,' he says, 'but when I got there I hated it. So I resigned after three months, packed my bags and came here.'

He had twice before been to England. First for a couple of years as a postgraduate student at the RCA and then later, when supervising the making of the dies for his Australian coins at the British Royal Mint in London. Now that he had decided to make a new start, it seemed natural to come to England and begin his second career as a designer and craftsman in silver and gold.

The second career flourished. From the first workshop in Clerkenwell, his business soon expanded until it occupied seven buildings in the area. At its height, he had a showroom in an exclusive part of London's West End and a partnership with the Duke of Westminster. He was first made a Freeman and then a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, one of the oldest of the so-called Livery Companies, the descendents of the mediaeval guilds. In 1980 he was awarded the honour of Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George for his services to the art of design, and in 1982 was granted the Royal Warrant of Appointment as Goldsmith and Jeweller to Her Majesty the Queen.

But it was the very success of his business that sowed the seeds of what he sees as his third career - in technology. He didn't much like the large amount of management needed to run a business of the scale to which his had grown. 'I found that I was just getting bogged down in administration and fighting fires that other people had lit.' In addition the economy of the country was on a down-turn and he had realised that for a long time he had had no life other than work. So he gradually wound down his operation and retired to the country, where he could concentrate on designing, consulting and working on his new interest: his computer.

He had first used computers in his business in the mid-seventies. It was for the usual things: costing, accounting and customer records. But the power and potential of these new electronic machines intrigued him. 'Because I was interested in computers I kept a fairly close eye on what was happening in the area of computer-aided design, but felt that it wasn't sophisticated enough to be useful. Computers were very good for doing engineering drawings and things like that. But they were no good for the creative side. It wasn't till about three years ago that I eventually decided the technology had caught up with what I wanted it for. In fact it hadn't. But by about six months ago we'd been pretty much released from most restrictions and had got the freedom that we need. Now we can actually design in three dimensions.'

So Devlin's design studio today has become a kind of toyroom for techies, crammed full of electronic machinery. There is the usual fax machine, of course, colour photocopier and laserprinter, but the real powerhouse of the place is £100,000 worth of Integraph Workstation with two screens,

looking a little like the control panel of the Starship Enterprise. This is where Devlin now sits for hours every day, designing.

It is a very powerful piece of computer technology indeed - he tells me proudly - running at five million instructions per second, with forty-two million memory units and a thousand million units of storage. The software with which he works used to have to be loaded into the computer on big eight-inch floppy discs - seventeen of them. Now it loads in a few seconds from a compact disc.

The workstation needs all the power it can find to do what Devlin demands of it - to design directly in three dimensions. He is pushing the technology to its very limits. Previous computer-aided design software only allowed very restricted freedoms, he says. 'Even though the computer people would have you believe that you could design on their systems, you couldn't actually design conceptually on them at all; they were much too restricting. In fact instead of computer-aided design, I always say it was computer-dictated design. But now that the technology has caught up, I feel totally free on the computer. I don't have any restrictions on what I want to do.'

He sits down at the console to show me. On the left-hand side is an overall view of the piece he is designing, perfectly shaded and illuminated. The right-hand screen shows plan and elevation, front and back, drawn as lines in 'wire-frame'. He works with a hand held cursor - a bit like the familiar 'mouse' - pushing and pulling it over an electronic tablet on the desk. As he moves the cursor on the tablet, an arrow on the screen follows the motion. Around the edge of the screen is a whole menu of commands. Move the arrow to any one of the commands on the screen and press the button on the cursor: a whole new hierarchy of commands appears. All in all, Devlin has access to a menu of many thousands of different instructions he can give the computer.

I ask him to develop a particular shape: a 'Klein Bottle'. Devlin creates two circles, marks out a couple of lines and tells the machine to fill out the shape to my exact demands. The speed is extraordinary.

'Of course I can change it now and perfect it as much as I like,' Devlin says. 'The most exciting thing is that for the first time you can actually see the thing you're designing before you make it. You can keep working on it and tweaking it until you get exactly what you want. Whereas in the past one's always had to settle for a lot of loss in the translation from a conceptual idea to its materialisation. You were never happy with what you did because either you were never quite good enough as a craftsman or you didn't have enough tools to make the transition without losing a lot. Now the computer gives you the ability to get pretty much what you want. If you can't get what you want it usually means you don't know what you want.'

I ask how he normally starts a design.'One begins with a concept,' Devlin explains. 'And then it develops during the materialisation of that concept. What you start off with you can't formulate in your mind because it's just as hard putting words to it as putting forms to it. So in a sense it's there, but the task is then to get it out. In the process of getting it out, it nearly always changes. Mostly because you can't do exactly what's up there.' He taps his head. 'So you have to put up with getting something else.'

He shows me a number of designs that he has worked up fully. The computer displays them exactly as they would exist had he already made them physically - all the details exact.

But designing in this way is only the first stage of Devlin's ambitious plans. The real challenge is to create a device that would start with the computer design and go on to actually make the physical article. 'I decided that if you design on a computer then you also want to be able to get it out in three dimensions. And there isn't any way of doing that satisfactorily. So I'm in the process of designing a machine which is a kind of computer peripheral which will sit beside the workstation which will be able to make whatever I design in three dimensions as automatically as you can print something out on a printer.' When will it be ready? 'In six months' time or so.'

There already exist some ways of doing this. Devlin shows me an example. It is the plastic master for a filigree gold ring. The process is remarkable. An ultra-violet laser is mounted over a bath of liquid plastic. The computer slices the theoretical design into theoretical layers a few thousandths of an inch thick. It then instructs the laser to draw the shape of each slice in the liquid plastic. Where the ultra-violet beam hits the plastic it solidifies. Layer by layer, like a series of onion skins, the pattern is built up into a complete solid plastic object, which could then be used to cast the actual design in gold. But, says Devlin, it can only be done with this particular material and the definition is nothing like good enough for what he wants to achieve.

'There are also what are called Computer Numerically Controlled milling machines. But they're real pigs to use. They're very difficult. You have to develop the skills of a really skilled engineer to be able to use them. What I'm trying to do is to devise something that you just need about the same amount of skill as you need to operate a laserprinter. But also, the machine that I'm working on will have total universality, so it can do practically anything.'

'By the way,' Devlin suddenly adds. 'The technology's also the technology of three-dimensional fax.' He points to a glass on a table. 'We'll be able to fax that glass anywhere in the world in about twelve months' time.' I suggest this is very close to 'Beam me up, Scotty.' Devlin laughs. 'Exactly,' he says, 'though it won't come out as glass but as plastic at the other end.'

When the design for Devlin's new machine is complete, it will provide the facility for completely hands-off jewellery production. He will have finally achieved his aim of getting from the concept to the completed piece without being frustrated by what has tormented him all his life: the inability of even his high level of manual skill to achieve exactly what he had in his mind originally.

He admits that some gold and silversmiths are concerned about the replacement of craftsmanship by the computer. But he has little sympathy for that attitude. 'I don't believe that any work of art or design is any the better for having been done by someone with both his hands tied behind his back and blindfolded. What we're striving to do is to get the thing out of our imagination as accurately as possible. It doesn't matter what the means are. You use the best means at your disposal.'

And you may need no craftsman's skills at all. 'In the future there'll be a facility for customers to go into a jewellery shop and see some basic designs that they like the idea of, but they want their own customised version of it. They're going to be able to say: well, I'll have mine based on this shape. The machine will automatically produce the new design and if they don't like it they'll try another one. I actually have a little program here now, where the customer can come and draw a shape and the machine will just go brm.. brrm... brrrm and there's the article completed.' I ask whether there isn't a down side to the idea that everybody could be their own designer or artist. But Devlin will have no truck with such elitist views.

'The computer can make the mediocre person seem quite good. But the other side of the coin is that when you've got a lot of people creating, the top of it tends to rise. Take music for example. It doesn't make music any better that it's very difficult to learn it. In the past it was very difficult to learn how to write music. It was difficult to learn how to play an instrument. But that doesn't make the music any better. Computers have made a terrific difference. So in the pop music field for instance, the quality of pop music is probably far greater today than what it was twenty years ago. To be top of the pops now, you have to be very very good in one way or another. And if your mind is open, you can hear why it's number 1. There's a difference between being number1 and being number 30. And if there's a lot of pressure from below, it pushes up the apex. So there's a real advantage to having technology make available to more people the facility for doing things they couldn't do before.'

At 60, Stuart Devlin wants to start a whole new creative revolution.

**Paul Kriwaczek**

# arthur mcintyre

By the time he was 13, Arthur McIntyre was already something of an international art star, with exhibitions of his drawings and paintings in New York, London and Tokyo. Organised by Jeffrey Smart, the shows featured the work of promising young Australians from the Argonauts' Club, an innovative ABC radio and television program which, during the 1950s, was an extraordinary outlet for children's talent in Australia and which became an important influence for a generation of artists.

Children submitted examples of their writing, music, drawings and paintings and these were read, played or shown on screen to mass audiences. McIntyre was just ten years old when he joined the club and every week for many years he contributed rolls of paintings and drawings.

Jeffrey Smart, who took the name of Pheidias, was the program's art critic and he would display and comment on McIntyre's work virtually every week and then personally respond by letter.

'By the time I was about 13 or 14 I was something of a junior art star, sort of like a little male Shirley Temple of the Australian art scene', recalls McIntyre.

'One of my greatest regrets now is that all of that work which was sent down to the Argonauts' Club was probably put into the garbage. It was a staggering amount of work over the years and some of it would be interesting to see in retrospect.'

These days McIntyre's mature work is represented in major galleries such as the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, and the Australian National Gallery, Canberra.

The National Gallery of Victoria has recently bought an oil painting and four very large drawings. And there is talk of an exhibition featuring 15 to 20 works from throughout his career at the National Gallery some time in the future.

The survey has been suggested by James Mollison, the gallery's director, for several reasons. 'He is an artist

up to the present time has developed his work outside the mainstream of the dealers' galleries. The work is simply not known to a wide group of people and I believe that overall he is interesting enough to single out to show the Melbourne public.

'His work is interesting because at present he seems to me to be an heir of a long line of Sydney painters, people from Ian Fairweather through John Olsen, going past the midstream generation, those artists who I won't bother to name, and out pops Arthur McIntyre. He seems to have absorbed everything that Sydney had to offer over the past 40 years and is painting away in relative seclusion.

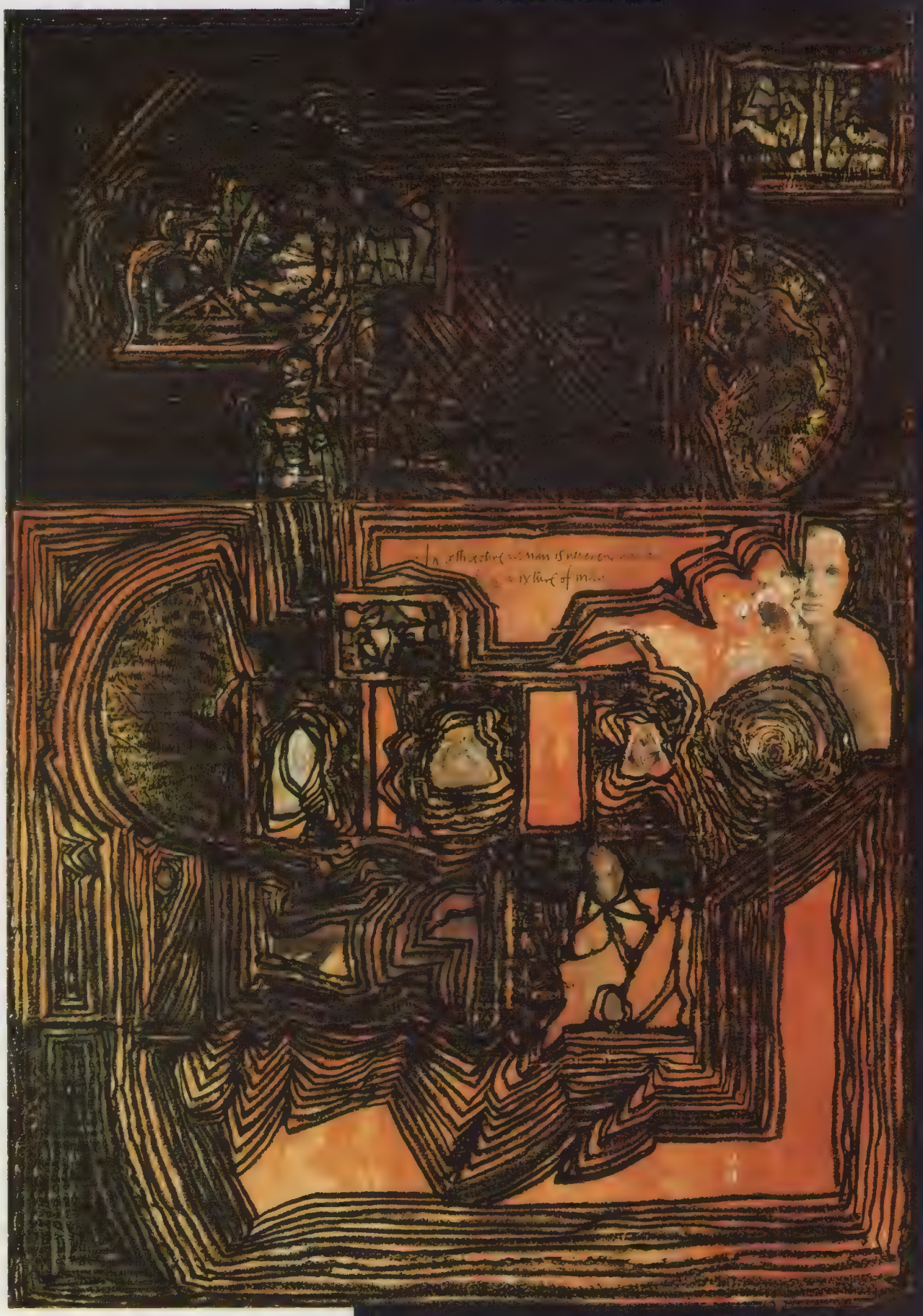
He has deliberately kept away from the public and he has not attempted to promote his painting the way that people really have to if they wish to make sales. There are two things people can do. One is become part of the very public art world of Australia and second, is stay in the studio and get on with the work, and that is what McIntyre has done.'

Andrew Sayers, curator of Australian Drawings at the Australian National Gallery, Canberra, has been familiar with McIntyre's work for many years and says of his art: 'We have several works in the collection by Arthur McIntyre, but my favourite is the small sketchbook recording his stay in hospital in 1989.

Arthur, it seems to me, is most comfortable on a small scale and this fine and powerful series represents the best of his art. I cannot think of any Australian artist who has been so self-obsessed and in this sketchbook he reveals with extraordinary frankness his horror at the corruptibility of the flesh.'

Apart from his artistic output, McIntyre is known as a former art critic for quality newspapers such as The Australian and Melbourne's The Age and as an author of books such as **Australian Contemporary Drawing: Resurgence and Redefinition** and **Contemporary Australian Collage and Its Origins.** He has also curated

*An attractive woman is never one woman, 1986-7, oil stick collage, acrylic on paper*



**Below:** *All the news, 1986, mixed media on paper.*
**Right:** *Skull, 1987, oil stick on paper.*

major blockbuster shows on drawing and collage.

However, this year he has turned his back on anything peripheral to his painting and drawing and that includes writing, family commitments or social life. To his way of thinking, everything apart from art is largely irrelevant and meaningless.

McIntyre has always attempted to push his art to the limits and has eschewed 'the cult of niceness' which he feels pervades most local art. For instance, he believes that sexual imagery is intrinsic to much good art and pornography does not exist for him, so he happily embraces all manner of sexual images in his works, including explicit sex photographs. He is also interested in the dualities of existence, yin and yang, the earthly and the infinite, and most of his work incorporates symbols of maleness and femaleness.

His work has changed over the years, according to the gallery owner who has exhibited him since the early 1970s, Gisella Scheinberg, director of the Holdsworth Galleries in Woollahra, Sydney.

'In the beginning he was a rebel and was angry towards society and the whole world and that was reflected in his art. Over the years I think he has matured, mellowed, and he has got softer and is more digestible, more accessible. I think he has learned to cope with his anger. He is a very interesting artist. He is a very colourful person and his art is very individual. You can't say that he is following any school; he is very very original.'

Louise Collier, director of the Painters' Gallery, Ultimo, Sydney, plans to have an exhibition of McIntyre's work next year. She has also been familiar with his work over a number of years.

'Arthur's work challenges our most intimate perceptions of our physical and emotional self. His tools are collage and drawing. No topic is sacred. This desire to go beyond what is considered safe has often led to him being considered a maverick painter. The best testament to the success of his work lies with those supporters who have remained passionately loyal to the development of his work and ideas through the years. His work would probably lose some validity if it held mass appeal. It is never a comfortable position to lie on the edge of, or go beyond, what is considered comfortable even if it does provoke us to a better understanding of our sensual selves.'

Significantly, the earliest influences on McIntyre's art can be traced to where he was raised. Born in 1945, he grew up in virtual isolation at Katoomba in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney. He had a half sister who was ten years older but he felt more like an only child. And because the Mountains have such cold, bleak winters, the young McIntyre would stay indoors, occupying himself by reading and drawing - and listening to the Argonauts' Club.

However, the cold Blue Mountains winters were also conducive to watching films and the cinema was a vital early influence, he says. 'I was a movie addict. In Katoomba there were two cinemas when I was in my early teens. There was the Savoy and the Trocadero, a dance hall converted into a rather intimate cinema which on week nights showed the great classics by Ingmar Bergman, and all manner of significant new films from the Continent.

'The people who ran the cinema were Europeans and they had this passion for quality cinema so very often they would run these films basically for themselves. On winter nights I would trot along when I was a teenager and there would be me, the owners and their family. They were virtually private screenings.' The cinema is one of the reasons he has used so much photographic collage throughout his career.

After leaving school, he studied at the National Art School and at the Alexander Mackie College, but found the stylistic and conceptual limitations

***Above:*** *Grand Hotel, 1976, mixed media on masonite.*
***Left:*** *Head decorated.*

**Right:** *Abundance for all, 1960, collage and gouache on paper*
**Below:** *East meets West, 1988, acrylic on canvas*
*National Gallery of Victoria*

placed on him stifling because this type of art education encouraged the 'Manhattan-style minimalism, or 'stripes and splashes' school, at the expense of almost everything else'.

It took a trip to France in 1975 to make him finally break away from the confines of such an education when he visited Paris as artist-in-residence at the Power Institute studio (administered by the University of Sydney and the Visual Arts Board).

In Paris he became fully aware through art from Spain and Germany, that figuration and content - political and socio-economic - were of major import in contemporary art.

Collage also became a substantial aspect of his output for the first time and his visually confronting **Survival and Decay** series, which established his reputation as a mature artist and which dealt with themes such as birth, death, disease, old age, ugliness, sexual stereotyping and Freudian psychology, was conceived. Of the influence of Paris on his art, McIntyre says: 'Somehow Paris itself seemed to me like a collage. Everywhere I looked there was decay and mildew and it was the middle of winter and there were posters peeling off walls. Paris was made up of layer upon layer of textures which symbolised various histories and changes which had taken place.

'I was also fairly broke so I couldn't afford much in the way of materials. So I began tearing up bits of paper, then looking at magazines and seeing all manner of possibilities of incorporating collage into my works on paper.'

Then, right on top of this instructive and turbulent time in Paris, came the death of his father. The impact was considerable since his mother had died in 1969.

'After the death of my father I became very aware of human decay and human frailty and human mortality. Living in Europe had made me aware of this anyway and my father's death at this time reinforced my preoccupation with the fact that we weren't on this merry-

go-round for long. So I did a series of works which incorporated collage. Much of it was autobiographical, using Polaroids, letters which were from my father, postcards to my father. It was the **Survival and Decay** series.'

Having discovered art which was the antithesis of the cool detachment which he despised, McIntyre expanded his **Survival and Decay** theme through exhibitions in Australia in 1976, 1977, 1978 and 1983 and with works which caused an outcry from certain quarters but did receive critical acclaim.

For instance, art critic Nancy Borlase, in the Sydney Morning Herald in 1976 and 1977, wrote: 'There are few artists who can extract such passion from the dustbins of life' and 'in his use of photo-collage he comes close to the fantasy and protest themes of the German Dadaists, John Heartfield and Raoul Hausmann.' Elwyn Lynn, in The Australian in 1986, described McIntyre as 'a master of theatrical montage'.

With his **Survival and Decay** series, McIntyre aimed to make art about taboo subjects by incorporating taboo materials - but not using his own faeces as he was once accused of doing!

In the first exhibition in 1976, he used medical drawings and photo-documentation from anatomical textbooks and focused on graphic images of advanced states of venereal disease. He also incorporated discarded bits of flotsam and jetsam from people's lives.

The 1978 series, subtitled **Womb Struck,** featured photo-documentation of normal and abnormal births and upset many people in Melbourne where it was shown. In the 1983 exhibition, titled **Phallusies,** he used pornographic material juxtaposed with textbook images of sexually transmitted diseases.

'**Survival and Decay** really caused a sensation on the Sydney art scene', he recalls. 'It is something that I've been burdened with ever since. At that time there was a history of conservatism entrenched in the Sydney commercial gallery scene and people weren't ready for an exhibition which dealt front on, shall we say, all puns intended, with venereal disease.

'There was a shock-horror reaction from a great many people within the art world itself, curators, practising artists and the media, of course, which had a field day.

'The gallery (the Holdsworth Galleries) was jammed with people who really wanted to be shocked. They went into the gallery and were shocked and were angry because they had been.'

But McIntyre hasn't any regrets. He believes those works were what he needed to express at the time and they made him feel better for having made them and shown them. Nor has he mellowed on the issue of pornography and art.

'I just don't believe there is such a thing as pornography. I believe that human

***Above:*** *Life at the centre and the edges, 1991, detail of six panel painting, oil on canvas.*

***Below:*** *Blood relations, 1991, oil on stonehenge on canvas.*

***Clockwise from top left:*** *Diseases due to vegetable parasites, 1975, mixed media on paper.*

*Anonymous, 1976.*

*When in Rome, 1976.*

*What a piece of work is man, 1976.*

*Diseases due to vegetable parasites II, 1975, mixed media on paper.*

*The inscrutable eye, 1976, mixed media on paper.*

beings are masters of their own destiny and I believe they have a right to engage in any activity they want to engage in, certainly sexual activity. I am completely non-judgmental when it comes to sex and what other people do. And I am outraged by any form of censorship in art or in any other form relating to sex.

'What I am intrigued by is the fact that it is often the most unlikely people who have the most bizarre sexual inclinations, not that it makes any difference in terms of what I think of them as people. It doesn't worry me if they happen to be married and have six children and they happen to be homosexual and into whips or whatever.

'What people fail to realise is that human nature is extremely complex and a great many people who are some of the most prominent figures in society, in politics, the arts, law, the heroes of our society, in private indulge in activities which most people would condemn as being disgusting and outrageous. I don't condemn those activities. I believe people have a right to do whatever they want to do.'

Given McIntyre's attitude to sex and pornography, it is intriguing to learn that he was brought up with protestant middle class ethics and comes from a long line of missionary women who set off into the African jungle with Bibles under their arms.

It is probably the zeal that was passed on. As he encapsulates it: 'I am an extremely determined male who is totally dedicated to pursuing my painting career to the limits and giving it my all.

'My most recent paintings and drawings retain an interest in human sexuality and vulnerability, but are almost devoid of collage. Many of my new oils on canvas are polychromatic homages to humanity, its lusts and longings and are painted on a grand scale. Much of my imagery these days is ambiguous, leaving plenty of room for viewer interpretation.'

**Bronwyn Watson**

# FASCINATING AIDA

*'Abstract art is a true mysticism ... or rather a series of mysticisms that grew up in the historical circumstances that all mysticisms do, from a primary sense of gulf, an abyss, a void between one's lonely self and the world. Abstract art is an effort to close the void.'* **(Robert Motherwell)**

I was recently invited to a dinner party where, during a discussion on art education, a professional colleague supported her contention that a particular art school was second-rate with the criticism that it was still teaching the values of Abstract Expressionism. The phrasing of this criticism made her intention perfectly clear: to be accused of promulgating the values of Abstract Expressionism was about as devastating a putdown as she could imagine.

I innocently mentioned, partly out of mischievousness, that I really liked Abstract Expressionism.

'Oh yes, of course,' she agreed, 'So do I, but it's hardly a model for art students in the nineties.' I wanted to ask why not, but was saved by the arrival of the dessert and a change in the conversation.

In fact, I have a pretty good idea why not! It's because Abstract Expressionism epitomises a concept of painting as individual personal ritual: unpredictable, emotional, somewhat primitive and sensual and, worst of all, very difficult to evaluate by means of rational and logical argument. Where the practice of making art slips more and more into the clean, white-gloved hands of academics and professionals, any art which asserts its right to be unruly and ill-mannered, any messy, emotional, uncontrollable art, is in for the cold shoulder.

Were it not for that fact, **Aida Tomescu,** for one, would be much better known and more respected than she is. Hers is an art which does not dictate terms to the viewer but lays itself bare, allowing itself to be constantly reinvented. It is open to multitudinous interpretations. It takes immense risks and it constantly undermines expectations. If ever there was proof that the tradition of Abstract Expressionism remains alive and full-blooded, it's here in these big, brooding, powerful pictures.

Nevertheless, there are important aspects of divergence in Tomescu's work from the tenets of traditional Abstract Expressionism, at least of the American kind. We may, indeed, find some closer parallels with European gestural painting.

*Poarta 4, 1990, ink and charcoal on paper.*

Traditionally, American Abstract Expressionism was associated with the heroic. The paintings of Pollock, Kline and de Kooning, although they could occasionally be savage, were characteristically exuberant and bursting with positive energy. This derived in large part from these artists' use of line. The energy was linear energy. Jackson Pollock's paintings were comprised entirely of lines, interweaving to form an overall pattern. The surface of paintings such as **Blue Poles** is so light and evanescent that the vertical blue poles had to be introduced to stabilize it, to prevent the whole image from dancing off the wall.

Tomescu's art is not linear but is based on mass. Large slabs of paint, usually black or dark grey, a bit like the plates that make up the earth's surface, constantly shift against one another, creating ruptures, trapping more fragile and delicate areas of painting in the interstices. Earthquakes occur at the edges of these plates where one abuts another. In fact, Tomescu's forms can be so dense and heavy that one searches for the relief of the tiny areas of lightness and colour that are released by these eruptions. Often these tiny areas of colour are pressed against the very edge of the canvas, further suggesting pressure and stress.

Perhaps we can best characterise these paintings as Abstract Expressionism after the fall, after the loss of innocence, when the belief that art can change the world has become unsustainable. In that sense, although Mark Rothko is an artist she says she admires, his painting is about as different from hers as one can imagine. In Tomescu's art we are faced with odes to nature on its downward slide to oblivion, Turners for the post-industrial age.

They are too pessimistic to be called heroic, and too contemplative. The recent paintings, in fact, are thicker, darker and heavier than ever before. They are less gestural and more contemplative and they take much longer to complete.

When Aida Tomescu first arrived in Australia from her native Romania in 1980, her work made extensive use of collage. Torn scraps of paper were pasted onto the surface and then painted over. Sometimes these collaged elements were completely obliterated by paint, serving only to suggest shapes or provide texture. In any case, they were never used to any narrative purpose or as elements of the picture with discreet identity. They were always subsumed into the overall composition.

It was probably inevitable that, as the paintings became larger and more sophisticated, the collaged elements would disappear altogether. Pictorial unity is now achieved through colour and form rather than texture and, as a result, there is a much greater emphasis on the manipulation of depth.

Tomescu's use of collage was symptomatic of her painting methods in general. Many of her compositions begin with some idea from the real world, something seen, which is then made the starting point of the pictorial structure. But just as the collaged elements disappeared into the paintwork, so there is never any suggestion of figurative elements in the completed paintings. What interests her is not the appearance of things but the relationships between things, just as a composer is interested in the relationships between sounds.

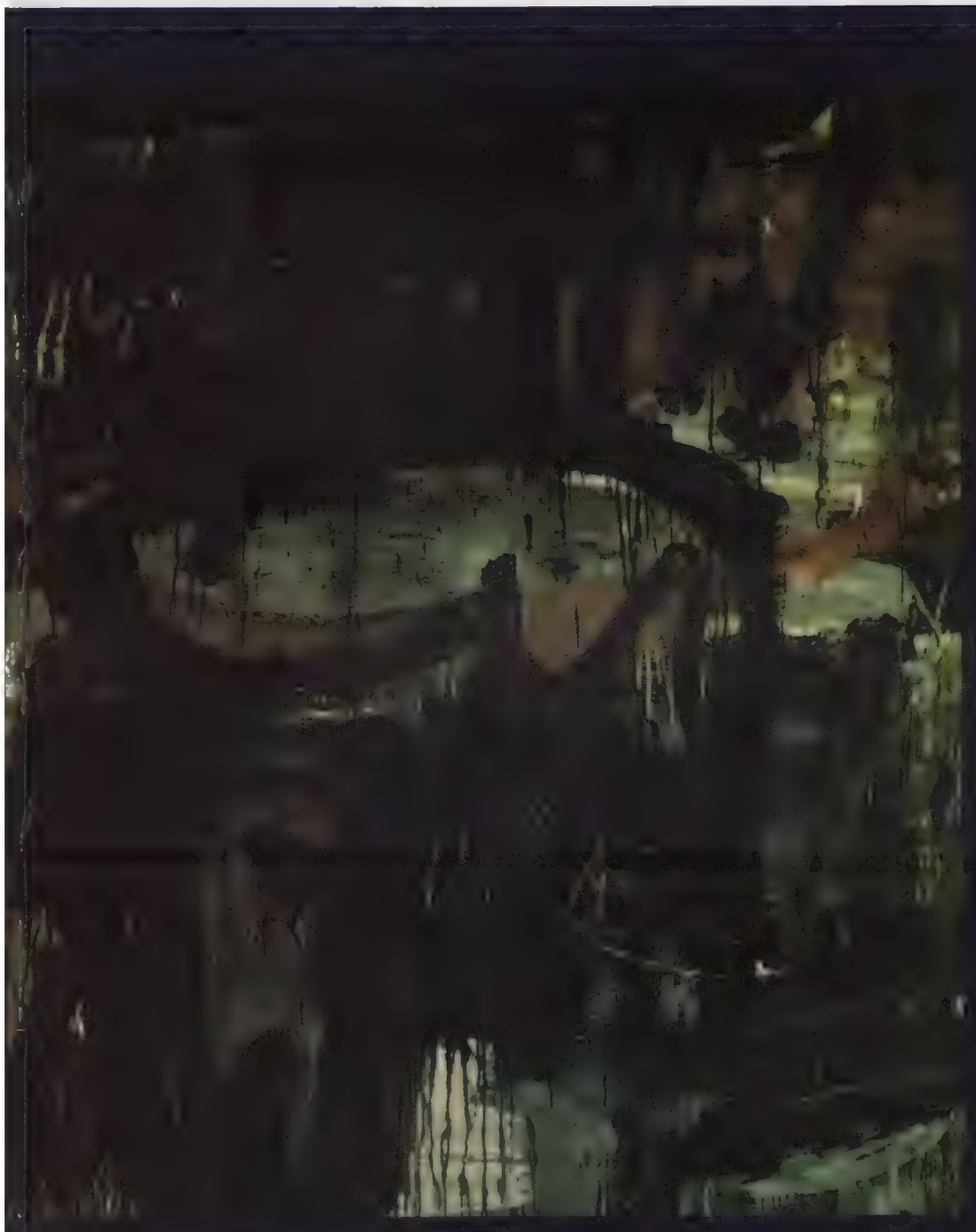
The work she did in Romania, where she had her own studio for two years before leaving the country in 1979, was more closely related to realistic imagery, more responsive to things seen. Even then, however, her interest in a purely abstract art was aroused by a de Kooning exhibition in Bucharest.

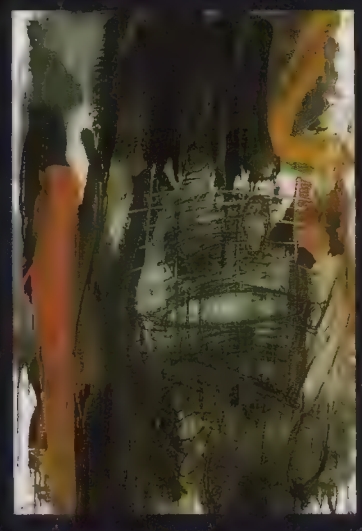
The exotic titles of her paintings, often derived from Romanian words, are intended to 'remove meaning' in the sense that they are words which sound fantastic but have no literal associations. The titles throw you, the viewer, back on your own resources, removing any of the usual props you might use to create meaning, forcing you to confront the reality of what is there in front of you.

What is there is a truly abstract art that is uncompromising and difficult. 'It is important', she says, 'to struggle against that facility which comes from having worked for many years, not making it easy for yourself. Painting must be a kind of battle.'

Perhaps the same might be said about looking at paintings, or at least any kind of looking from which real enlightenment might result.

**Peter Timms**





***Left:*** *Seed Plai, 1990, oil on linen.*
***Above:*** *Plai 8, 1990, reworked etching : charcoal, ink, gouache*
***Below:*** *Senn, 1990, oil paint on paper*

OPINION

# GOOD TASTE : BAD TASTE

***Gareth Sansom:*** *Test, 1985, enamel, wax, turpentine and stamp on paper.*

Good taste to those who believe they have it, is something they were born with, a genetic present from their parents, a gift of the gods. Good taste is, they are sure, ineffable, immutable, timeless and theirs. This, despite the abundant evidence that all is effable, mutable, of a time and, maybe, not theirs!

Artists are often subjected to this entrenched attitude through critical evaluations of the so-called experts who dominate the media and who frequently have an arrogance and insensitivity to anything that exceeds what they have arbitrarily decided constitutes good taste.

It is not suggested that critics should abandon all standards and pander only to the lowest common denominator, but it is important to recognise that we are all products of our own time, that standards do change, that no-one's opinion is absolute and that other possibilities exist and are valid.

While a gallery owner is perfectly entitled to promote art and artists who adhere to a particular set of theories and beliefs, he or she ought not to confuse these theories and beliefs with something other than what they are - fallible.

Art, like other aspects of life which are prone to fashion, is the subject of overnight sensations and the lure of the latest fad. Remember when neo-expressionism was all the rage?

Remember Julian Schnabel?

And how much does financial advantage inform what is considered good taste?

It is usually in private art galleries that artists who are to become the latest 'icon' or 'demonstrator artist' first appear. The favoured ones are then picked up by public galleries as 'curatorial darlings'. They become part of an entrenched family that appears in all sorts of exhibitions, surveys and competitions.

These are the artists who demonstrate what a select band of curators, gallery owners and arts writers have decided offer the only acceptable style at the moment.

Currently in Australia such luminary artists include John Nixon, Jenny Watson, Imants Tillers, Julie Brown-Rrap and Richard Dunn. These artists belong to a group or association, dubbed by critic John McDonald (not entirely flatteringly), an 'Academy of the Avant Garde'. In order to discover who is currently an acceptable demonstrator artist, see any recent Perspecta Survey at the Art Gallery of New South Wales - the Australian Bicentennial Perspecta 87 being a classic example of all that is most blinkered in officially approved Australian art.

Some artists reach star status at a relatively early age and appear in all the major exhibitions, have their work

sent to exotic ports to represent our country, win all the big prizes and are feted and lionised by Society. In recent times such 'lucky' artists have included Susan Norrie and Dale Frank.

The drawback to this seemingly delightful circumstance is that enormous demands are placed on the artist to produce and, sometimes, this can lead to exhaustion on all levels. Then, of course, the moment of glory fades and the artist is left to wonder what happened to his or her brightly burning star.

Public art galleries, you might hope, would see their task as to reflect the great variety of approaches to art, both historically and in the contemporary scene. You would expect that their function is to demonstrate that art is a matter of many questions and responses, all of them potentially valid. If you are to become informed in matters of art you have the right to expect a broad experience and the best place to get that experience should be the public art galleries.

Sadly, we are more often presented with exhibitions that are narrow, repetitive and predictable and in which the 'taste' is pre-ordained.

The Australian National Gallery in Canberra, fortunately, has been something of an exception over the past few years. Despite its slight Melbourne bias in the choice of artists, it always manages to have a range of exhibitions, at least one of which (though often more), is worthwhile.

Of course exhibitions need a specific aim or a special theme but when survey exhibitions all look much the same from year to year, when survey exhibitions and single artist exhibitions feature the same group of artists, ennuie is not the only thing that sets in. Ungenerous thoughts, even dark suspicions, arise.

Probably unjustly, you begin to wonder whether the frequent inclusion in public exhibitions of, for instance, John Nixon's endless reworking of Malevich's motifs or Jenny Watson's little girl 'marks', doesn't represent anything more than a close relationship with the curator and/or other interested parties.

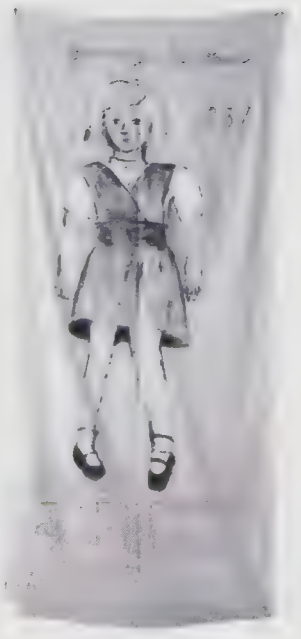
Some arts writers seem to belong to the one club and are fulsome, if obscure, in their detailed expositions of the work of rather much the same artists' works from one exhibition to the next and one magazine or newspaper to the next.

It is interesting to note that even though the names of the writers periodically change, the basic allegiances rarely do. It sometimes appears that one quite busy person is scribbling away under an assortment of names.

One thing does seem clear, however, and that is in recent years arts writers have been dabbling in the arcane mysteries of Semiotics and Foucault and writers of that ilk. These have helped set the standards for good taste in arts philosophy and arts writing. The result of this can be seen in the work of a cavalcade of academically trained writers. It is characterised, as far as I can divine, by a special talent for writing about writing about art rather than writing about art itself.

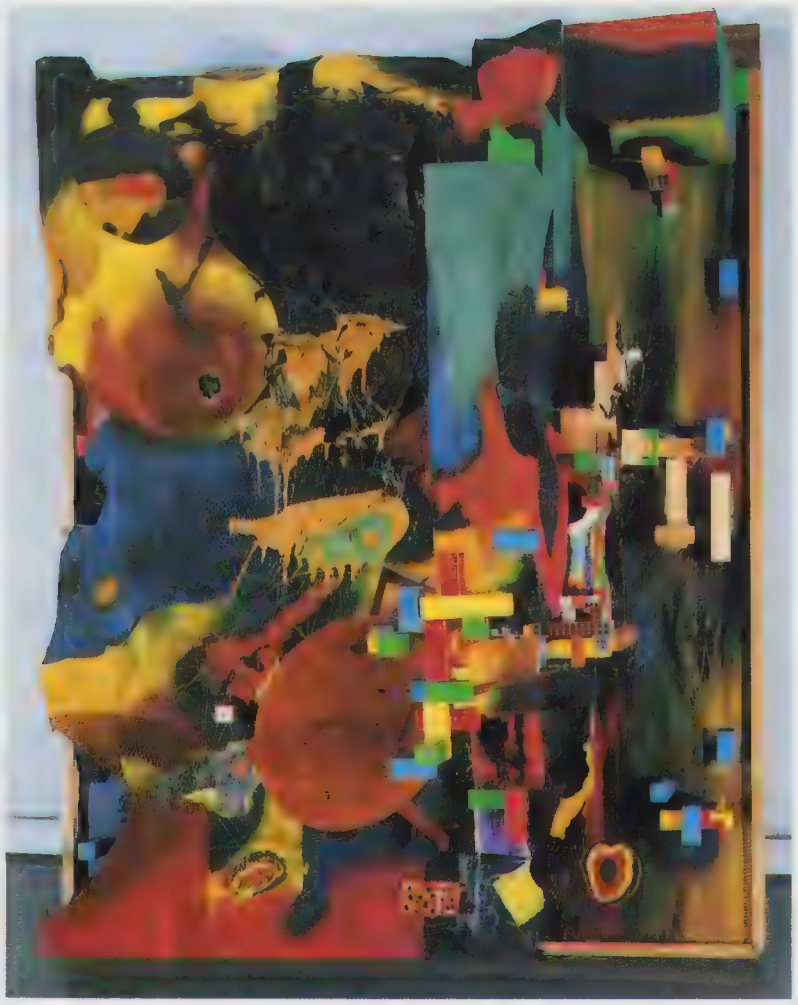
It is the New Obscurantism.

The upshot of this is the creation of an alienating wall of words, heavily latinate in origin, obfusc in their application and representative of a pioneeringly intrepid trek into the limitrophe and chthonic reaches of The Oxford Dictionary, Second Edition. This,



***Left: Julie Brown-Rrap:***
*If Hypocrits, 1990.*

***Above: Jenny Watson:***
*Self portrait as a little girl, 1987.*



**Dale Frank:** *Title not known, 1987-8, mixed media.*

I gather, is meant to impress, if not the reader, then certainly other members of the group. Examples are especially frequent in gallery catalogues, both public and private.

The cult of niceness arose during the nineteenth century, a period which saw itself as the very height of civilisation, culture and rightness. Such self-congratulatory vision tends to breed hypocrisy rather than honesty. Unfortunately, while we have abandoned many of the firmly held, God-given beliefs that underpinned nineteenth century society, its idea that art should neither question nor challenge or offend, still holds firm sway throughout much of our society. So does the arrogant assumption by the self-appointed that they have the right not only to decide but to suppress.

It continually amazes me that the same mind that can deal with the vagaries and power of the motorcar, can make use of a jet aircraft and can contemplate with equilibrium a world in which nuclear power is a matter of common occurrence, is reduced to frothing outrage and vociferous irrationality by the depiction of the naked human body in the sexual act, homosexuality or any other idea, whether sexual, political, philosophical, social or historical, which is not in complete accord with its own, usually very narrow and repressive ideas.

The urge to censor in the name of God and good taste is, rather, the urge to repress anything and anyone who does not agree with or perform according to the beliefs of a self-appointed zealot.

If Melbourne artist Juan Davila is not offended by and does not wish to repress the beliefs and acts of the Reverend Fred Nile, politician, why does the Reverend Fred Nile believe he has the right to impose his ideas and beliefs on Juan Davila?

Which, in the eyes of God, is the greater obscenity: Juan Davila's depiction of certain aspects of his sexuality, or Fred Nile's obsessive need to suppress Davila's art?

The cult of niceness is affiliated with religious and political conservatism and intolerance. They make for potent bedfellows in our society. Most disturbing is the belief that if it does not accord with certain ideas then it must be destroyed, removed, eradicated, expunged and terminated. The attendant hysteria, the calling down of the wrath of God, makes you wonder what God must think of these ravening, self-elected interpreters of His word who seem to lack any hint of Christian charity, forgiveness or humility.

The censoring of Davila's painting **'Stupid as a Painter'** during the 1982 Sydney Biennale revealed how wowserism is ever with us. This huge painting was later displayed in the privately owned Roslyn Oxley Gallery in Sydney's Paddington and drew hordes of patrons wanting to see what the brouhaha was all about. It is not known how many innocent souls were corrupted eternally by the experience.

Interestingly, both Oxley's new gallery and Juan Davila became famous overnight. Those of a cynical turn might suppose that censorship can, in fact, be good for business.

Of course, it is not only gay artists who

encounter the antagonism of the conservative reformers. They are simply the more obvious targets should they make their homosexuality overt in any way.

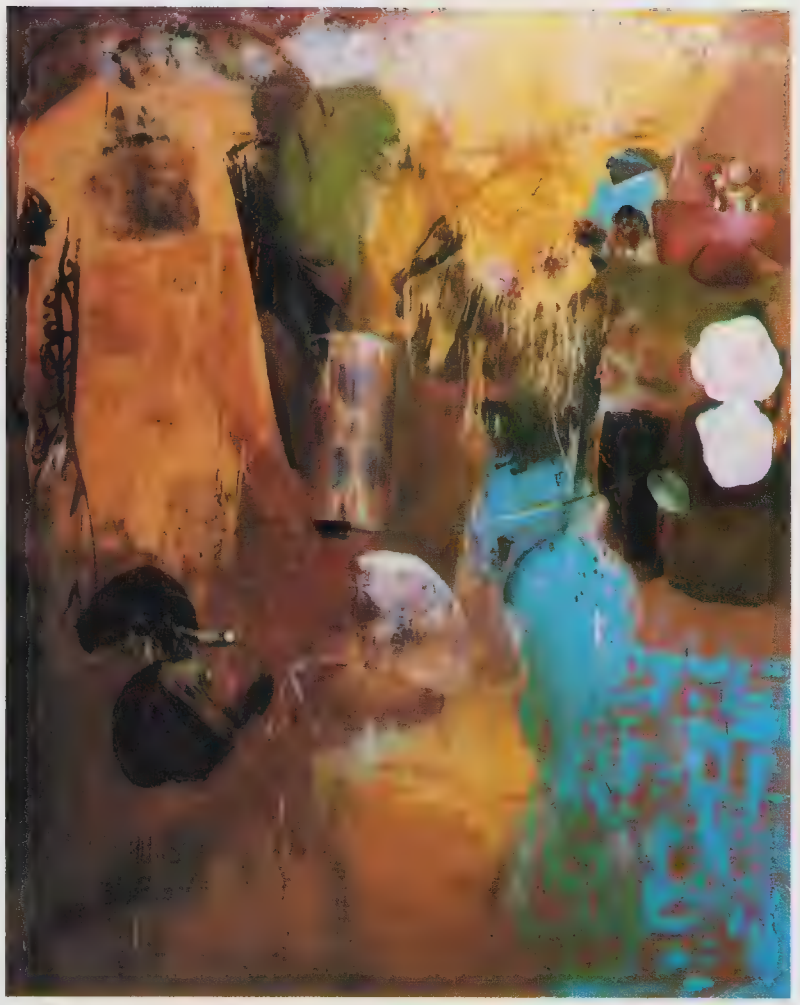
In the Perspecta 1985 survey at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, a work by local photographer Anne MacDonald contained a sexually explicit image. It provoked a flurry of controversy. The controversy was not a simple one, it was not solely a matter of those prone to moral indignation having the time of their lives, but also that gallery staff succumbed to so small and noisy a pressure and censored the offending image.

This was a rather ludicrous reaction as it was one image within a larger work. Such behaviour makes a mockery of the whole concept of freedom of expression and the duty of a public gallery to educate and to lead in matters of the arts. It was not overly admirable to allow a few strident voices, especially such wellknown and predictable ones, to deprive the public at large of the right of access and evaluation.

Ironically, if there had been no fuss, far fewer people would have been aware of the work's existence.

Melbourne artist Gareth Sansom 'has consistently defied the self-conscious tenets of good taste in local art' (Arthur McIntyre). His personal explorations of aspects of life that most would seek to hide are deliberate as he believes that 'provocation and shock tactics can lead to enlightenment' (Frances Lindsay). Such perversity has not endeared Sansom to those in our community who prefer a Pollyanna view of life and who find confrontation unacceptable.

In America, the recent celebrated case involving an exhibition of works by the late Robert Mapplethorpe at the Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center is an outstanding example of good taste in its most moral and conservative guise attempting to suppress the display of art works. A group who knew in advance that they would be offended took the gallery to court to prevent the exhibition taking place. Would it be too trite and



obvious to point out that in this instance, and all similar instances, if the would-be viewer knows that he or she will be offended then they are free to choose not to see the exhibition?

A similar threat of action had caused the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C., to succumb. However, galleries in Hartford, Chicago, Philadelphia, Berkeley and Boston stood their ground. So far, none of these cities has turned to salt.

In the Cincinnati trial, the jury of eight, five or whom had never been in an art gallery, was composed of mostly suburban, working-class parents. This jury, which you might reasonably expect to be essentially 'redneck', came down with a decision of the most estimable good sense. In the words of one of the jurors: 'We thought the pictures were lewd, grotesque, disgusting, but ... art doesn't have to be beautiful or pretty.'

Images may not all be 'nice' but that in no way prevents them from being art.

Consider the work of Goya, or Bosch.

In the late nineteenth century, the work of Vincent Van Gogh was not considered 'nice' either. He was thought

***Left: Juan Davila:*** *Stupid as a painter, 1981, acrylic and collage on photographic mural.*

***Above: Susan Norrie:*** *Untitled, 1988, oil on canvas.*

***Above:*** *Seagram Building, 1957. Architects: Mies van der Rohe and Philip Johnson. Photograph: Ezra Stoller.*

***Right:*** *Coopers and Lybrand Building, Rice/Daubney, Sydney.*

a madman, nothing more or less; his work was the product of a disorganised and deranged mind. He only sold one work during his lifetime.

A few years later, an eminent critic was so outraged by the paintings of a group of painters, including such talentless artists as Henri Matisse, that he called them **Les Fauves** (the Wild Beasts).

The history of art is full of examples of artists who suffered at the fate of the reigning but fickle standards of good taste of the experts of the day who judged them and found them wanting - nonentities like Rembrandt, Vermeer and El Greco.

After World War II the evangelical style of the architects Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, now called Modernism, took root in the United States and rapidly transformed itself from a style based on socialist principles to the house style of corporate America. The 1950s were its heyday, epitomised in the severe and classical elegance of the Seagram Building in New York.

During the '60s and '70s, the achievements of Modernism were beginning to be questioned. By the late '70s controversy and conflict were raging due to the advent of what is still being called, somewhat inaccurately, Post Modernism.

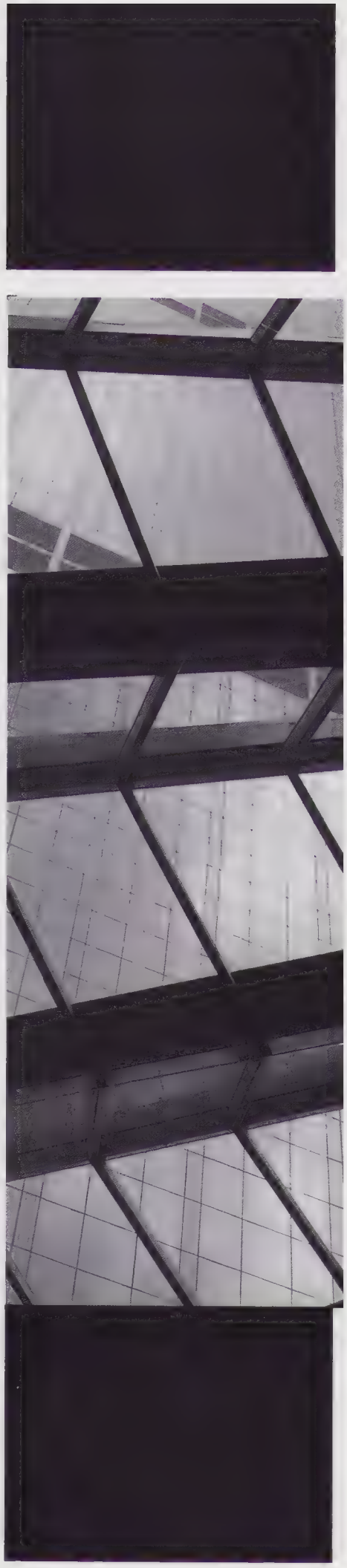
The followers of Modernism were outraged by the betrayal of those architects who had taken not only to historical reference but even architectural jokes. Such frivolity towards the serious business of architectural design was anathema to the purists.

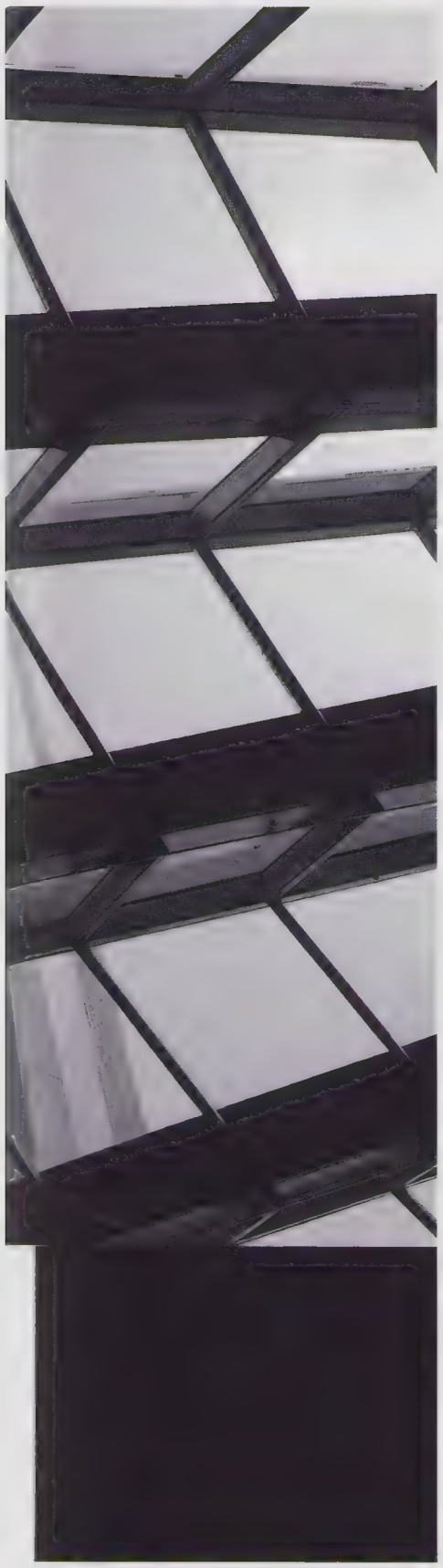
The ferocity of the language in the defence of the good taste and the truth of Modernism and the denigration of all architects and their issue who even hinted at Post Modernism has been quite breathtaking. It smacks more of the extremities of fanaticism than the rationality and pragmatism that supposedly underly Modernism.

Prince Charles, not always known for his orthodoxy, bravely bought into the debate with some fairly trenchant criticism of the failures of Modernism: its coldness, its rational insensitivity, its unfeeling geometry and its treatment of humans as statistics or industrial units. In his book, **A Vision of Britain: A Personal View of Architecture,** he championed a return to past values, values he saw as reflecting a humanitarian benevolence and an environmental sensibility that would restore dignity to man. His ideas seem to be a sort of soft focus, eighteenth century, classicist ideal, utopian, arcadian and misted over by yearnings for an age that never was.

The Modernists, to put it mildly, waxed wrathful, especially those in the Architectural Review, who heaped bile and vituperation upon the Prince and his pretty book.

Perhaps the Prince does have his head somewhat *parmi les nuages,* but many of his criticisms of the built evidence of Modernism are perfectly valid. Modernism had high ideals, it sought to improve the living and working environment of workers and society in





general. It staunchly believed it could improve mankind, morally and socially, through architecture.

You do not need to look too hard at many housing estates, industrial areas or city centres built, or rebuilt, since 1945, to see that despite some splendid but isolated examples, Modernism, has, more-or-less, failed.

In fact, some of its failures have been spectacular: the Pruitt-Igoe housing development in St. Louis, U.S.A., has had to be carefully pruned by demolition; in Brazil the new capital, Brasilia, made its proud declaration of Le Corbusier's planning ideals in the early '60s, but is now crumbling beneath its pretensions, shoddy workmanship and isolation; Chandigarh, in India, designed by the master himself, rattles around in its own spacious and dusty emptiness; in Paris the terrifying La Defense precinct is an environment for alien kind only; in Albany, New York, the Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza is as traumatising and as grandiose and bombastic as its name.

You cannot grow ivy over any of these!

Consider the suicide towers of any city's highrise housing for the poor; behold the glittering arrogance of city centre towers in any major city, bereft of all human scale and warmth and with the individuality of metal packing cases.

In Australia during the '60s and '70s, highrise buildings to house the poor went up in Sydney, at Redfern and Waterloo and, especially, in Melbourne where thirty-storey estates, coyly hiding beneath names like 'Debney Meadows', became living filing cabinets of human despair.

One thing for which Sydney can be grateful to the fallen entrepreneur Alan Bond, is that he caused the demolition of the dreary, lumpen Commonwealth Centre.

Every city has its examples of Modernist buildings that its citizens love to hate and every couple of years journalists dutifully compile lists for us to gloat and argue over. Less frequent are lists of those buildings we love.

Prince Charles may be pipe-dreaming, but he said something that needed to be said by someone who could get some sort of a reaction. The resultant furore has led to some degree of discussion and, once the fury and acrimony have abated, perhaps there will be some rational reassessment.

The Modernist-Post Modernist 'debate' has revolved around idealism versus philistinism, good versus evil. The question of good taste (Modernism), as opposed to bad taste (Post Modernism) has been obscuring the real issues.

What those who would be King - or Queen - of Taste seem always to forget is that nothing in life is static, so how can good taste be forever unchanging?

It is the mavericks of their time who challenge established tastes and who, in doing so, keep the cycle moving. If we were to achieve that perfect state in which good taste were infinitely fixed, we would probably be dead.

**Bibliography and further reading**


Jacques Delaruelle, Commentaries: *'The Australian Bicentennial Perspecta 87'*, **Art Monthly:** Australia, December 1987

Lesley Power, Artslaw: *'The Vice Squad, the artist and the community - whose morality? whose moral rights?'*, **Art Monthly:** Australia, June 1988

Natasha Serventy, *'The public laws that reach the private parts: Censorship in the visual arts'*, **Art Monthly:** Australia, December-January 1989-90

Christopher Allen, *'Group shows and collections'*, **Art Monthly:** Australia, April 1990

Arthur McIntyre, *Contemporary Australian Collage and Its Origins*, **Craftsman House,** Sydney 1990

Arthur McIntyre, *Australian Contemporary Drawing: Resurgence and Redefinition*, **Boolarong Publications,** Brisbane 1988


**Brian Phipps**

# when art computes

Dr. Mike Field, Reader in Mathematics at the University of Sydney, is not an artist; in fact, he remembers his attempts at art in his schooldays as terrible, but his use of mathematics has precipitated him into the realms of exquisite artistry as he produces the most elegant patterns and designs in his study of dynamical systems, nonlinear analysis and symmetry breaking.

'Our program, which is still under development in collaboration with Professor Martin Golubitsky (Houston), shows how symmetry can impose order on chaos. A by-product of this work is the production of complex symmetric patterns on the computer screen.'

Dr. Field developed this program while at the Mathematical Sciences Institute at Cornell University (USA). The program uses colour in an effective and dramatic way to bring out fine details of very complex structures.

The use of colour is not really intended to be an attempt at art, although mathematicians choose their colours carefully. Colour is used to bring out fine details in the structure of very complex objects. It becomes a necessity when the mathematical points plotted exceed the number of pixels on a television screen.

'There are about a million pixels on a high resolution computer monitor. As you carry out the mathematical process, various pixels are turned on. Normally they are black. Eventually if you plot enough points some of the pixels will be hit more than once and we use colour to bring out the detail and complexity of the picture. It is a sort of colouring by numbers.'

Some of Dr. Field's calculations plot more than 60 million points and the pictures thus formed are representations of chaos.

The beautiful designs appearing on his IBM RISC System/6000 computer are not fractals but chaotic or strange attractors.

'The fractal is a repetitive configuration which would repeat and repeat itself to

infinity. It has this curious property that you can look at a detail and magnify it and see the same thing again. The more you magnify it, the more it stays the same. A classic comparison in nature is of a jagged coastline which will still contain in its smallest sections the same jagged edges.'

Dr. Field's chaotic attractors are more orderly and will rarely repeat. 'You can keep on plotting points and they'll bounce around forever but the basic shape in the picture will not change.'

What Dr. Field and Professor Golubitsky are actually measuring are chaotic systems.

'Chaos in this instance is used to mean unpredictability and complexity. Strictly speaking, the use of the word 'chaos' is misleading as the dictionary definition of chaos is something without form at all', Dr. Field explained. 'If you have structures with no form at all, something really chaotic, there wouldn't be anything to say about them except that they were chaotic. In fact, when we find chaos or turbulence in nature there is usually plenty of structure, provided we know how and where to look for it.

'Perhaps the simplest way order can appear in chaos is through the presence of underlying structure and symmetries in chaotic dynamics.

'Imagine that you are standing on a river bank watching a river in flood. What you see is an apparently random sequence of eddies, whirls, vortices and other trademarks of turbulence. What you do not see is any underlying structure. Now suppose we take many pictures of the same portion of the river bed over a period of time and form the average of the set of pictures. We might then expect to see the formation of structures corresponding, for example, to variations in the river bed.

Although this example is simple, the idea is basic to effective signal processing of data from any complex or chaotic system.

'Chaos as it is used in science carries with it the idea of unpredictability. One of the standard examples is the weather. The weather possesses this unpredictable character. Though weather stations around the world provide data which is fed into a big computer in order to predict what the weather will be in two days time, there needs only to be the slightest discrepancy in the data for you to get a completely different result. As weather data is never perfect and could not be truly complete unless there was a weather station on every point of the earth's surface, weather forecasting by its very nature can never be exact. Popularly this phenomenon is known as the butterfly effect. If a butterfly flaps its wings in Sydney, there may be a long term effect in the weather in Rio.'

Turbulence is all about us. Oceans are turbulent, winds create turbulence, high clouds are often turbulent, but according to Dr. Field all these things will have an underlying structure which can be discovered. 'The surface of the sun is turbulent. It is not flat but covered in chaotic granulations.'

Dr. Field took his first degree at Cambridge and then did his PhD in pure mathematics at Warwick (UK). His RISC System/6000 is funded by the Australian Research Council as part of a joint project with Drs. Galloway and O'Brien (also of Sydney University) on Nonlinear Mathematics and Computer Graphics. Dr. Field's work involves 'a whole range of techniques from nonlinear mathematics, signal processing, image enhancement and time-series analysis.'

In the calculations for these complex mathematical problems, more and more exotic designs emerge. Some are tilings, quite as complicated as anything produced in China or the Middle East throughout the centuries. In the plotting of 50 or 60 million mathematical points Dr. Field and his colleagues are often amazed to see icons emerge on their screens - the Star of David or the Mercedes Benz logo.

So much interest has been engendered by the realisations that Dr. Field and Professor Golubitsky are working on a book to be called **Symmetry in Chaos,** which will be published next year.

'It is a conjunction of opposites', Dr. Field said. 'We intend it to be a very accessible book because it is being written in direct response to the fact that people are so interested in the pictures. We feel we need to tell them what it is all about.'

With the book in mind the mathematicians asked an American graphic artist, Wendy Aldwin to choose the colours for some of their mathematical problems. One of her set of colour choices resulted in a muted and very delicately coloured graphic which looks incredibly like the shell of an existing American crustacean.

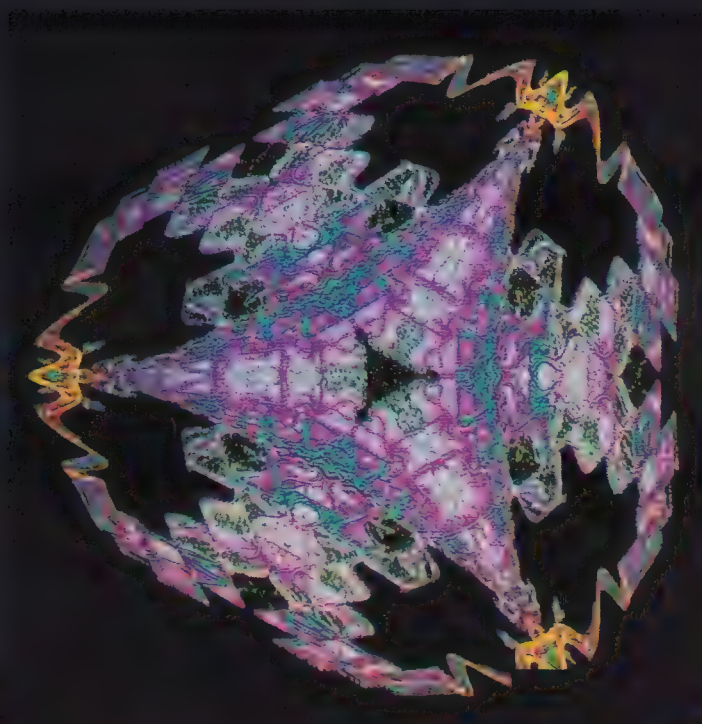
Dr. Field's elegantly symmetrical pictures of chaos would have delighted scientists through the ages, who have always attempted to impose form on nature.

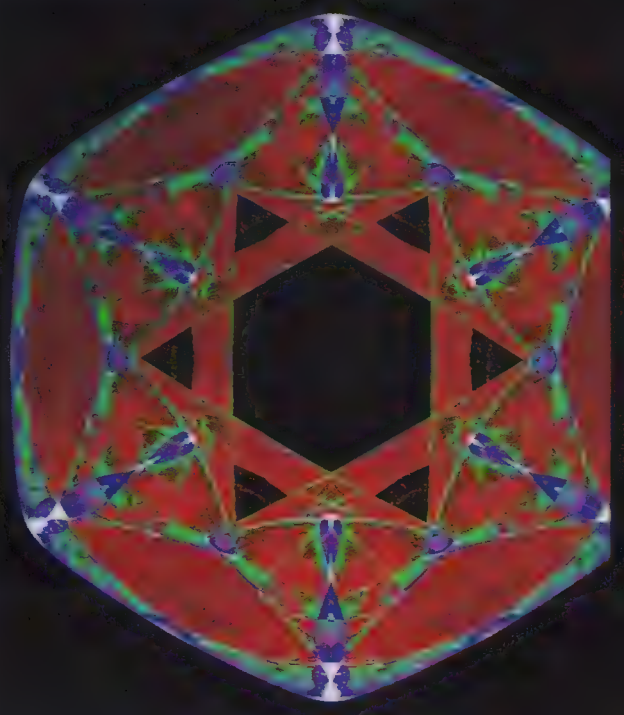
'Man has always sought symmetry and order. The ancient Greeks tried to chart the solar system. The underlying laws of physics have a great deal of symmetry in them. Perhaps it has been reflected in our brains, for everything that is man-made has symmetry, whether it is a building or a road sign. We are comfortable with symmetry.'

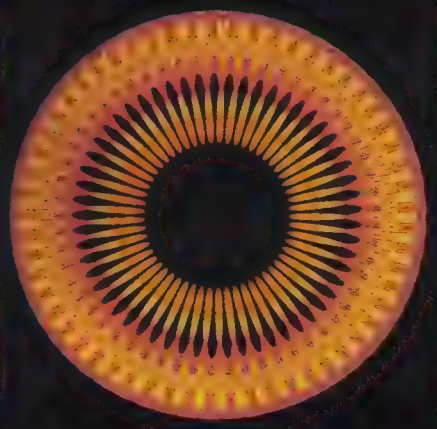
The computer graphic realisations published here arose out of a joint project by Dr. Mike Field of the University of Sydney and Professor Martin Golubitsky of the University of Houston, into symmetry creation and pattern turbulence. The pictures are copyright and cannot be reproduced in any way.

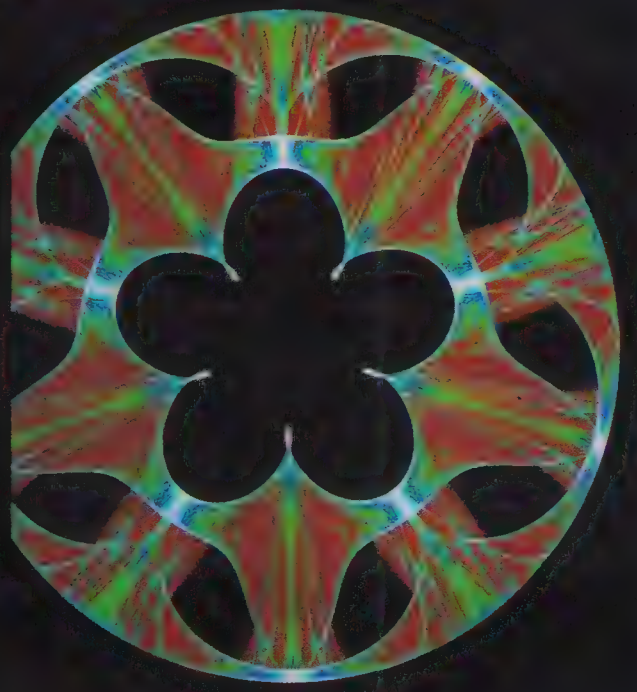
**April Hersey**

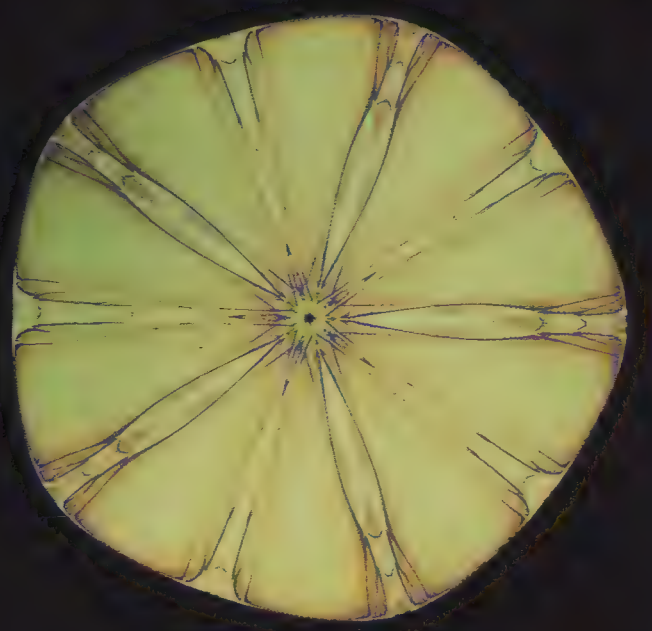
**Oz Arts** is grateful to **IBM Quarterly,** Autumn 1991, for some of the material used in this article.











*Computer graphic realisations which arose out of a joint project by* ***Dr. Mike Field*** *of the University of Sydney and* ***Professor Martin Golubitsky*** *of the University of Houston.*

The people of the south western desert area call themselves **Anangu,** literally, *we people*. Anangu lands are vast, stretching in a huge circuit surrounding the sacred monoliths of Katatjuta and Uluru. From Ayers Rock, they extend to the south east to encompass the community of Indulkana. They reach almost to the Great Australian Bight in South Australia, into Western Australia as far as the remote community of Warburton and in a circuit north to encompass Lake Hopkins and Lake Amadeus. Within the boundary are the Musgrave, Mann and Petermann Ranges. There are now over 3,000 Anangu and their cultural influence extends over an area exceeding half a million square kilometres.

Anangu are known by many names denoting aspects of the dialects of western desert language they speak. Many refer to them as **Pitjantjatjara,** although this is but one of a number of dialect groups.

They define their lands according to the ancient dreaming tracks of their ancestors who made the features of the land and gave them all their language, law and customs as told and enacted in the stories of the Tjukurpa, the Law.

This word Tjukurpa has become widely known and is mainly used to describe the Creation Time or Dreaming. However, amongst Anangu it can also simply mean story or oral history.

Historically Anangu territories are very arid lands with highly irregular rainfalls. All water sources have an association with Tjukurpa. There are large permanent rockholes or springs in the ranges and along the dry riverbeds the beautiful white trunked river red gums have superficial roots which retain a great deal of water. In hard times, when soaks in the sand beneath them were dry, these roots could be chopped and drained of their precious fluid. Now they are more frequently used as craft materials (as indeed they were in the past).

Anangu no longer survive solely by hunting and gathering food. Many small communities established throughout 'the Lands' now depend on tanks, bores and pumps for water which is drilled with rigs. Remote communities have come to rely on vehicles and on their capacity to purchase many of their needs from the stores and truck supplies. In this context many Anangu have turned to what could be described as the professional use of their knowledge of the land, its materials, animals and plant uses as a means of exchange with the wider world as well as to educate and communicate.

Interaction with tourism and in particular 'working with their hands' or working with wood, called *'punu'* has become an important economic activity in outstations throughout Anangu country. *Punu* is carved into traditional weapons and utensils or animals of the environment and the industry is supported and organised by the Maruku Centre based at Uluru. The Maruku truck operates regular buying trips throughout the remote reaches of the desert lands. All crafts are paid for with cash and this injection of cash into each community is extremely important to the local economies.

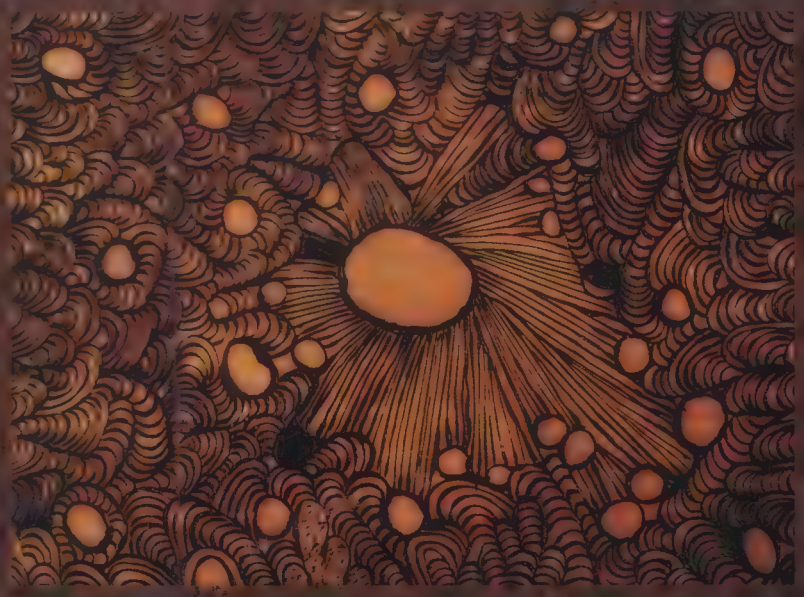
Although spears are now rarely used to hunt kangaroos, each spear and spearthrower is still made as a functional weapon with every attention to traditional techniques of craftsmanship. Making traditional weapons remains the province of the older, mature and initiated men whose survival once depended on this knowledge and the effectiveness of their weapons. Women have also retained their traditional skills of making utensils but have increasingly turned their attention to carving innovations not only of realistic snakes, perenti, goannas, birds and lizards, but also cats, bats and budgerigars. The patterns and designs worked in the surface of the weapons and the women's *'kanilpa'*, or wooden bowls, are segments or elements taken from important Tjukurpa stories - segments which record events along dreaming tracks in the artist's own country.

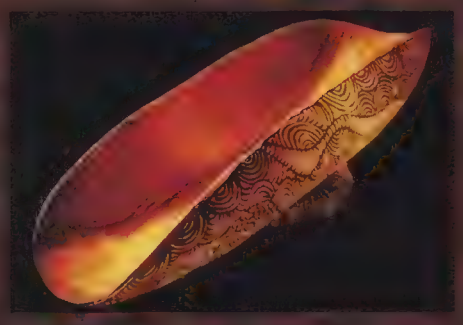
The earliest pictures taken of European ethnographers and travellers of the Anangu show remarkably few possessions being carried by these lithe and healthy, much-beloved great grandmothers and grandfathers of today's people. While men spent much of the day hunting or travelling it was considered the women's job and that of their children who accompanied them to watch carefully and search for any small foods that might be available. It was women's work to gather root foods, seeds,

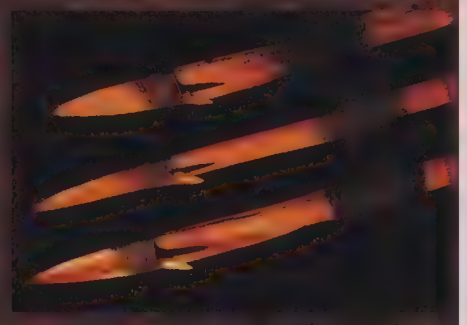
# ANANGU WOODCARVING

*Kuniya, the python, is important Tjukurpa (creation) story which is etched in rock art and the Mutitjulu waterhole at Uluru.*

***Right:*** *Ngaanyatjarra hardwood shields with incised decoration.*







*Uluru is a powerful religious site for Anangu.*

***Above:*** *Symbolic representation by an Anangu artist of the relationship of Uluru to the settlements of the homelands.*

***Above right:*** *Mimpu - hand carved and decorated wooden vessel. Photograph*

***Above far right:*** *Anangu spearheads - hardwood is lashed to the tecoma wood shaft with kangaroo sinew.*

wild fruits, gums, nectars, witchetty grubs, truffles, and also to pursue small game such as the almost extinct bilbi (now replaced by rabbits) and goannas, or other reptiles. These pictures show women carrying water from wells in deep wooden bowls or *piti*. These were balanced on a *'manguri'*, a hand spun head-ring. Photographs of people or family groups travelling, show women also carrying a range of smaller dishes also made from wood.

Today wooden bowls made by Anangu women are frequently described as *coolamons*, a term which most believe to be the Aboriginal word, but which has been introduced from elsewhere. The people have their own terminology describing not only the shape but also the distinctive use of each vessel.

The largest bowl, called *'piti'*, was carried on the head and predominantly used as a receptacle for food or for carrying belongings from one camp to another. It was also used for cradling infants. Of course, it was then carried between the hip and elbow, not on the head. *'Mimpu'* are the next largest bowls - usually deep for carrying water and also carried on the head with the aid of a head-ring. The beautiful *'kanilpa'* are flatter in longitudinal sections and generally used for the most extraordinarily skilful winnowing and separating of edible grass seeds by Anangu women. Large *'kanilpa'* are used for making damper today and these are also used for collecting fruits and berries. The smallest bowls or *'wira'*, were chosen to aid in digging - opening up the burrows of small game or digging out a soak searching for water. The *'wira'* was also used to ladle water into a larger bowl for carriage or storage or simply as a drinking cup. Today the variety in shapes and sizes of *wira* and *kanilpa* are so varied that only occasionally one's eye falls on the 'perfect' *wira* or the 'perfect' traditional *kanilpa*.

Carving is an occupation women generally take up once they have children and are more likely to spend time sitting around the camp in the company of other older women. It is an occupation that is very much enjoyed. Going out to collect carving materials is quite a social event that involves other members of the family and often includes hunting and food gathering. In the outstations and remote communities, carving these bowls and animals has become an economic mainstay for western desert women.

The technique of burning the designs into the surface of the wood developed 30 to 40 years ago, particularly on cattle and sheep stations where fencing wire was used daily by Aboriginal shepherds and stockmen. The designs all relate to the land, and to particular 'Tjukurpa' stories which tell of ancestral travels creating particular sites, rocks and waterholes. More elaborate symbols are generally found on large bowls, where the surface size allows creative freedom. The repetitive wave patterns can represent sand dunes, tracks on a long journey, or the pattern in the dust left by lines of dancers as they enact the great journeys during Anangu *'inma'* or ceremonies. Circular motifs may be waterholes, campsites or *'manguri'*, wood head-rings.

Because the Maruku Centre is based at Uluru, the presence nearby of the great sites associated with the poisonous snake, Liru, and Kuniya, the carpet snake, has inspired numerous works with this theme, and even the specialization by one artist Billy Cooley, who carves snakes only.

Within the next 12 months the Uluru area will contain a new interpretative centre incorporating a new gallery for Anangu craft and it is hoped that this will help promote a greater appreciation of the subtlety of eye, and skill of hand of so many Aboriginal crafts people in 'the Lands'.

This article is extracted from a book in progress by **Jennifer Isaacs** entitled **'Desert Crafts'** to be published in 1991.

# ABORIGINAL WOMEN ARTISTS

Aboriginal art is undoubtedly the most challenging art in Australia today. Complex in inspiration and dynamic in form, it has witnessed a renaissance in expression in the past decade. In outback communities there has been a revival of traditional forms and in urban communities reinterpretation using new materials and forms.

However, recognition for Aboriginal women artists has long been overshadowed by that of Aboriginal men. In a timely exhibition currently on show at the New South Wales Art Gallery, this position is being reassessed in a large selection of women's work from all over Australia.

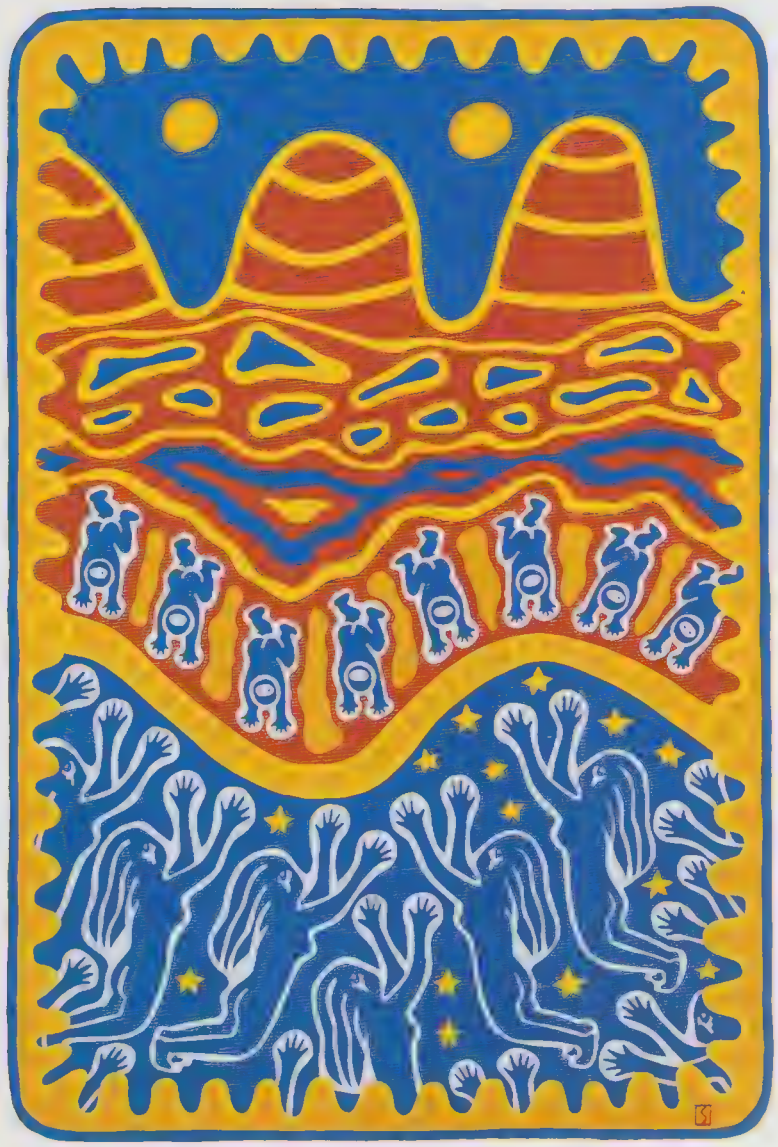
The **Aboriginal Women's Exhibition** is a landmark in their history as artists. It is the first time that a comprehensive national review has been given solely to their work by a major state gallery. And it is significant that the work has been selected by Aboriginal curators Hetti Perkins and Avril Quaill. Until now, Aboriginal women's work has usually appeared as a minor part of exhibitions featuring mostly the work of male artists. The sole exception to this was the Robert Holmes à Court Collection exhibition at the S.H. Irven Gallery in January 1990 of silkscreens from Ernabella, which included only women's work.

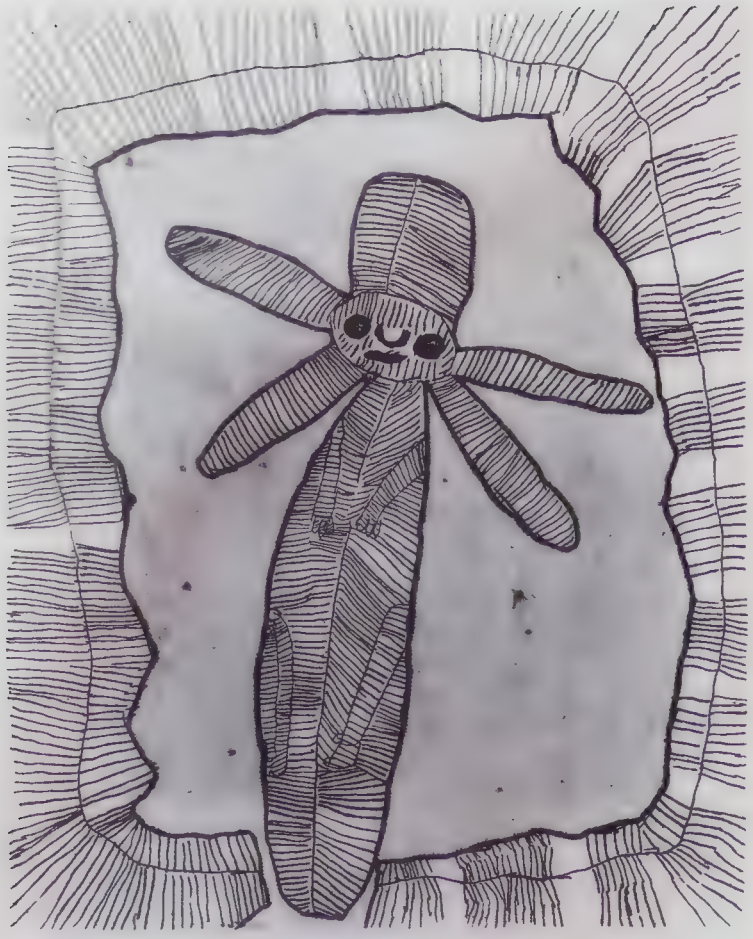
The current exhibition highlights a range of highly individual talents, in many media including bark, canvas, weaving, screen printing, photography and sculpture. And works have been drawn from many different outback communities as well as from urban centres where Aboriginal art is commonly known as Koori art.

What shows in most of the women artists' work is an astonishing freedom and spontaneity in approach, a highly individualistic expression where the sense of colour and the decorative is always sensitive and compelling. And while ochres are to be found in more traditional work, there is also the non-traditional use of acrylic paints and dyes which are used with effortless ease in both painting and screen prints. There is no sense that any of the work represented is in any way mechanical or has come from a production line.

The issues raised by the exhibition are complex. In communities like Yuendumu, Ernabella and Utopia, women largely initiated the production of art and it has only been recently that some men have begun to take part in this. Traditionally, however, Aboriginal women have played a minor role in the making of art. Where they do, they are usually restricted to representing

***Sally Morgan:*** *Taken away, 1987, screen print.*





11/40 Kukurr Mary anne purita '88

***Mary Anne Purita:*** *Kukurr, 1988, etching.*

***Namiyal Bopiri:*** *Dopan (hollow logs), 1990, earth pigments on wood.*

domestic subjects such as food gathering or fertility cycles. What they are allowed to paint is strictly determined by their ancestry and title to land. Unlike men, they are not usually allowed to paint the more important stories of their culture, those that are most sacred which refer to the maintenance of Aboriginal heritage and cosmic order. Their religious duties and powers are found in other activities.

However, the current show features work not normally associated with Aboriginal women artists. For example, the hollow log coffins colourfully striped with geometric patterning by Bopirri Namiyal from Ramingining and the bark painting by Daisy Mamybunharrawuy. This bark is an epic work from the Collections of the National Gallery of Victoria showing the famous Wagilag Creation story.

The fact that women have begun to paint in areas normally designated for men only, indicates the growing pragmatism of the Aboriginal people. Bark painters among the older men in Northern Arnhemland are disappearing as old men die and younger men do not choose to spend time painting. To maintain the heritage of the tribe, it is being left to women to fulfil the role of painters. Daisy Mamybunharrawuy who is regarded as one of Australia's foremost bark painters, has followed her father and is thought to be the first woman to paint on bark. She was regarded as the 'most worthy' woman of her tribe and permitted to work on bark. The sacred stories of her culture were passed on down to her by her father in the early sixties when she began recording them on bark.

In other communities such as Yirrkala in Central Arnhemland, while the women produce over 80% of the art work, their production is restricted mainly to souvenir items and the return for this is far less than that for men's bark paintings. Traditionally they, like most women in Arnhemland, have not been allowed to paint. The men therefore control the bark paintings and the subjects most valued by the marketplace.

Likewise male dominance of art production occurs in Papunya. Women are not encouraged to paint there, even though artists such as Entalura Nangala began painting in Papunya as early as 1982. Pansy Napangu's work is the sole representative of the Papunya women in the show. It was in Papunya that the central Australian dot painting movement originated, inspired with the assistance of school teacher Geoff Bardon.

Exquisite examples of dotted work are included in the show. In particular, the very jewel-like **'Snake Dreaming'** by Yulyuyu Napurrurla from Lajamanu, some hundreds of miles north of Papunya. Like much of the Papunya styled work, it embodies narrative, landscape detail and symbolism. This particular work also conveys an extraordinarily mythical and sensual presence through the visually intense veil of finely applied multicoloured dots.

Another example of the dotting technique is Ena Gimee's **'Kalliyarku - Artist's Grandmother's Country'.** Here Gimee's canvas reads like an imaginary map of the landscape. It is studded with concentric circles signifying places such as sacred sites or waterholes. These are linked in a traditional way with dotted lines indicating journeys or animal tracks.

A very traditional women's story, the importance of collecting food from the flying ant, is told in Clarise Nampinjinpa Poulson's **'Flying Ant Dreaming'.** Clarise is from Yuendumu.

Biddy Lindsay's **'Bush Fruits and Vegetables'** is a charming statement

in which the artist has laid out her imagery almost as if it were a botanical drawing - a fascinating collection of foods gathered by women from the country around Balgo which is her home. This is an extraordinarily picturesque statement in keeping with the artist's intention to explain her subject matter. Each food type is carefully numbered.

The Balgo community in Western Australia, like many other communities, includes several hundred practising artists, of which over a half are usually women. They have little comprehension of what becomes of their work once it leaves them, but it is significant that for most the making of the work is something about which they are enormously proud. And it is clear from looking at the traditionally based work of the show, that this work reflects a world view or philosophy where man aspires to be in harmony with his or her world.

Many Aboriginal women see the function of their art as that of encouraging the positive things in their culture. This is why in communities where extreme social difficulties are apparent, alcohol and violence in particular, the art production reflects cultural aspirations. Women see art as a medium for expressing beauty, not as a vehicle for political change, although they are in fact achieving change by the very act of painting.

The stunning basketry in the show is from Maningrida and Bathurst Island. Made from Pandanus and folded cabbage palm leaves these works reflect the dynamism of a very vigorous local weaving industry today.

The work of urban artists, most of whom have trained in European art colleges and most of whom have lived outside traditional lifestyles, reflects this urban background. Since they have no special Dreamings to which they can lay claim, many paint about things that Aboriginies care about, Aboriginal title to land, care of the environment, some manifestation of urban alienation, or subjects of universal and not specifically of Aboriginal concern.

For most Koori artists of this show the subject matter chosen is usually more overtly political and confrontational than that of their traditional sisters. A poignant statement of colonial oppression features in the work of Karen Casey's **'Got the Bastard'.** Here the leering smile of a grotesque hunter stares malevolently outward while beside him hovers the ghostly form of the extinct Tasmanian tiger. The subject of incest is taken up by Ellen Hose's haunting work **'Simply Surviving'.**

Highlighting the individual talents of artists in a show such as this will perhaps promote changes in the way the individuality and talent of Aboriginal women artists will be respected by their own people and by the public at large. For years men with many wives have done collaborative work with their spouses and signed it in the male name, giving no identity to the woman involved. This naturally has led to confusion in the marketplace as under one name there appear many styles. Now the women stand alone.

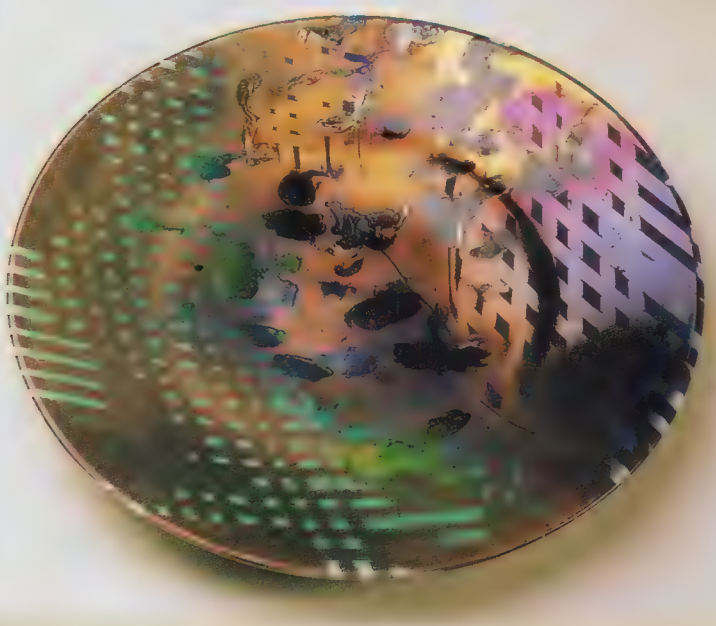
The Aboriginal Women's Exhibition which has been funded by the Australia Council is part of the statewide project - **Dissonance: Aspects of Feminism and Art** - a multifunctional project which runs until the end of October. It is a perfect exhibition to fit into this framework, recognising as it does the phenomenal, largely suppressed abundance of talent and innovation that Aboriginal women have at their command. There is no doubt, in the vivid presentation of this exhibition, that there is an enormous creative talent among the Aboriginal women artists of this country.

**Marie Geissler**

***Nada Rawlins:*** *Margkajas, 1991, synthetic polymer paint on paper.*

***Unknown artist:*** *Bicornal basket pre-1912. Lawyer cane basketry. Photograph courtesy South Australian Museum.*

# COLLECTING ART & ANTIQUES



***Above: Greg Daly:*** *Etched lustred platter with on-glaze decoration. (Courtesy Macquarie Galleries, Sydney)*

***Right: Anton Seuffert:*** *New Zealand 1815-1887, Secretaire, various New Zealand timbers. Collection of Australian National Gallery, Canberra.*

***Above:* Lin Onus:** *One day in Yokohama, 1991, acrylic on canvas. (Courtesy Painters Gallery, Sydney)*

***Far left:* Brian Hirst:** *Glass sculpture. (Courtesy Powerhouse Museum, Sydney)*

***Left:* John Coburn:** *Totems oil on canvas. (Courtesy Macquarie Galleries, Sydney*

**Mick Namarani Tjapaltjarri:** *Kangaroo dreaming at Mintjilpirri, 1990, acrylic on canvas. (Courtesy Gabrielle Pizzi Gallery, Melbourne)*

**Robert J. Morris:** *Untitled, 1990. (Courtesy Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney)*

*'Collecting is like peanuts - once you have had one, you've got to have another.'* Elizabeth Parke Firestone's words well describe the addictive quality experienced by many collectors.

Elizabeth Firestone, the wife of Henry Ford II, was one of the great post-war collectors whose grand collection of French decorative arts was sold at Christie's New York in May this year. Hers was a collection marked by a rare connoisseurship and passion for objects, and unlike most collectors today, price for Elizabeth Firestone was no object. Her treasures included works from Jean-Honoré Fragonard, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Francois Boucher, a Louis XV ormolu mounted black lacquer commode by Jacques Dubois, a medal commemorating the birth of the Dauphin to Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI and a porcelain collection that beggars description.

Like Elizabeth Firestone, former President of the Philippines Ferdinand Marcos and his wife were prodigious collectors. Their collection also fell under the auctioneer's hammer at Christie's earlier this year. The nineteenth century English silver realised a record for a single owner silver sale of £5 million. The 74 Old Master paintings sold for US$9.5 million. On a lighter note, an auction record for sports memorabilia was achieved in March at Sotheby's New York sale when a cigarette card depicting the baseball player Honus Wagner sold for an astonishing US$451,464.

For most collectors, however, the theatre of the great auction rooms in London and New York is only of passing interest. What really matters is the world they construct around their own particular passion. Some begin almost unintentionally, building a small collection based on something that they found irresistible years before ... a piece of jewellery, a photograph, an Aboriginal artefact, a handmade quilt or glass bowl, a set of nineteenth century English porcelain or an heirloom. However, there are many for whom collecting has been a very conscious decision. They look for a secure investment that would be more interesting than a bank bill, a share certificate or a piece of city real estate. They want to enjoy their investment for its aesthetic and historic associations.

It is perhaps the sheer enjoyment of having pleasing objects surrounding us that makes the activity of collecting art worth all the effort. At the lower end of the spectrum, collecting requires very few financial resources. A print of an up-and-coming artist need not be expensive. Undervalued sectors of the antiques market can also be within the price range of many. This was particularly the case with Australiana in the decades before the Bicentenary. At the top end of the investment market, however, there are hundreds of thousands of dollars at stake with a single purchase. This is not a game for the faint-hearted and is usually only played by corporate high fliers or the very well informed.

But where to begin? First a background knowledge in your chosen area is essential. This can be gradually built up through talking to dealers, reading the art pages of the daily press and by studying reference books. It is certainly worth subscribing to several magazines in the field you have selected. Do a tour of your local galleries. Develop a relationship with your antique dealer, your local auctioneer and with other more experienced collectors. Such people usually have a wealth of knowledge and can help you learn about your area. And as they are out and about in the marketplace they can often seek out things that might interest you.

The isolation of Australia from the world centres where most trading is done in international art commodities brings with it some difficulties. It means that if you are interested in an international area you either have to be satisfied with what comes up in your field in Australia, through the galleries, shops or auction houses such as Sotheby's, Christie's, Lawsons or Phillips or you will need to establish contacts with overseas dealers yourself. It is often possible to make good contacts when you are

travelling overseas, but it is not difficult to establish good relationships by mail. Seek referrals from those in the know (usually dealers) here in Australia or scrutinise the pages of international magazines for names of dealers of interest to you. The opportunity to meet many of the major dealers or artists in your field is one not to be missed. For antique enthusiasts there are several well advertised fairs - Carters Antique Dealers Fairs in both Melbourne and Sydney and the Antique Dealers Association of New South Wales' annual fair in the Sydney Town Hall. Information about the crafts can be obtained from Craft Councils in all states. And in painting and sculpture there's the biennial event, the Australian Contemporary Art Fair held in the Melbourne Exhibition buildings.

But the urgent question for all those wanting to use art as a means of securing their investments, particularly in times of recession, is 'where are the areas that have maximum safety?' All forms of investment have an element of the speculative in them and the art market is no different. The best procedure to follow is that of careful research. Know first of all the performance of your given area or speciality over the past few decades. The most secure areas are those that have shown solid growth.

The first thing to look for is quality. Then rarity. Antiques with respected provenance and design have always withstood the high price fluctuations of the paintings market. Antiques are a sound investment and can easily be resold. If purchased at market value and not at an inflated price they just keep rising steadily in value. This is particularly the case with any good quality eighteenth century Georgian furniture which because of its international desirability has kept steadily rising in value throughout the eighties. In contrast, according to the auction houses Australian colonial furniture which became inflated in price during the Bicentenary period has now dropped back and appears only to have local market appeal.

In the paintings sector there are secure investments to be had with deceased artists' work. The marketplace knows more or less accurately the quantity of work available and sets its own level for the value. This value then tends to rise gradually.

A good area for investment is Australian colonial art which until recently has been rather undervalued. Now excellent auction prices have been achieved for work from the 1880s and later which certainly indicates marketplace interest is being directed to early works in painting. The April sale by Sotheby's of the Australian Instone collection witnessed a strong interest in the Heidelberg School with Streeton's **'Bathers - Killarney'** selling for AS$220,000. The work of more prominent artists of the twenties and thirties also achieved top prices with William Dobell's **'The Smoko'** being knocked down for A$132,000.

Aboriginal paintings are also a key area for investment. The high point reached for sales in Aboriginal art was when Clifford Possum's Papunya styled painting sold in New York for some U$24,000 in 1989. The prices for most Aboriginal works, however, usually fall within the $1,000 to $10,000 range. Best buys for collectors are the early works on bark, board and canvas and key contemporary works. There has been a continuing interest in these areas by the major Australian galleries and Museums with steady sales from the major dealers in this field, namely the Hogarth Galleries in Sydney, Gabrielle Pizzi in Melbourne and Sotheby's. As well, Aboriginal paintings have definite international appeal and have already been targeted by both German and American collectors. These Aboriginal works fall into the category of being unique in art and unique in Australia. They are therefore bound to show strong growth in the next decade.

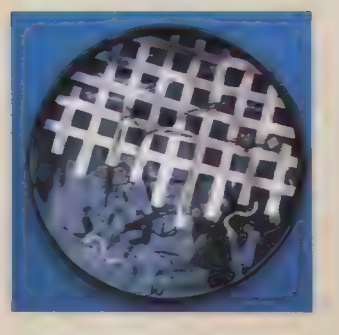
In the case of living artists producing contemporary work, the investor has to tread more warily, even though this area is perhaps one of the most exciting for investment. The rule is to cast your net widely. Visit as many galleries and exhibitions as possible. This will give you a feeling for what artists are saying in

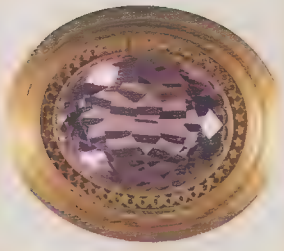
***Above: Trevor Nicholls:*** *Dreamtime landscape, 1987, acrylic on canvas. (Courtesy Hogarth Galleries, Sydney)*

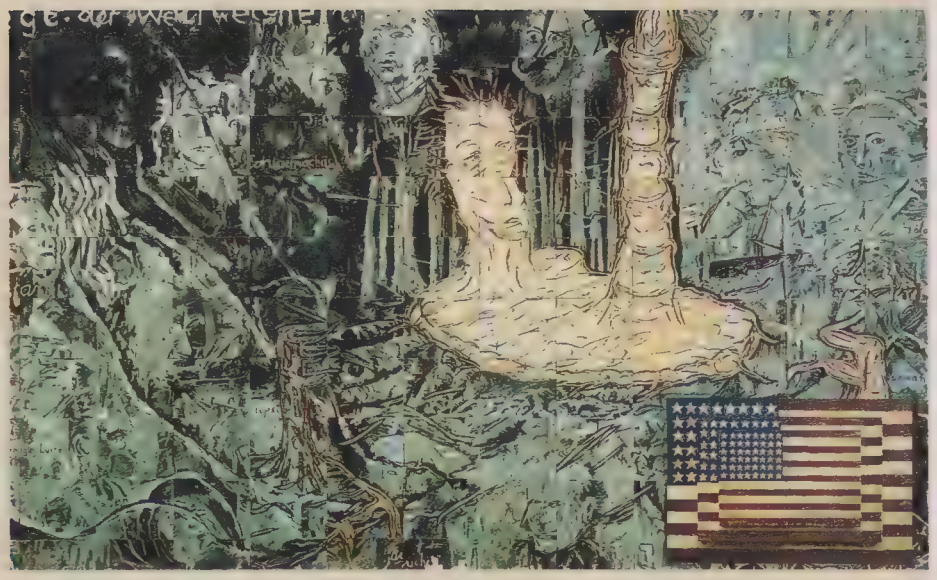
***Left:*** *Mining brooch, gold, c.1852. (Courtesy Anne Schofield Antiques, Sydney)*

***Left: Joe Furlonger:*** *Very large jar. (Courtesy Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney)*

***Below: Dale Frank:*** *Welcome to the High Chaparral of modern art, 1990, synthetic polymer paint, varnish and 'welcome' doormats on canvas. (Courtesy Deutscher Brunswick Street, Melbourne)*





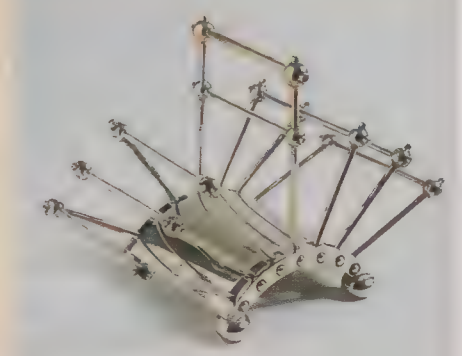


***Above far left: Warren Langley:*** *Glass plate. (Courtesy Powerhouse Museum, Sydney)*

***Above left:*** *Brooch, gold and amethyst, c.1890, A. Brunkhorst & Co., Adelaide. (Courtesy Australian National Gallery, Canberra)*

***Above: Imants Tillers:*** *Our Kiefer, 1988, synthetic polymer paint, oil stick and oil on 130 canvas boards (nos. 16760-16889). (Courtesy Deutscher Brunswick Street, Melbourne)*

***Right: Christofer Dresser:*** *Toast rack, 1878, silver, manufactured by Hukin & Heath, Birmingham. (Courtesy Australian National Gallery, Canberra)*



***Above:*** *Colonial sofa by unknown artist, Tasmania c.1840, cedar, brass and ceramic casters, horsehair upholstery. (Courtesy Australian National Gallery, Canberra)*

***Right: Henry Steiner:*** *Mourning bangle, c.1880, gold, jet, seed pearls, diamonds. (Courtesy Australian National Gallery, Canberra)*

***Below left:*** *Italian micro mosaic gold-hinged bangle, c.1870. Sold at Christie's for $14,300.*

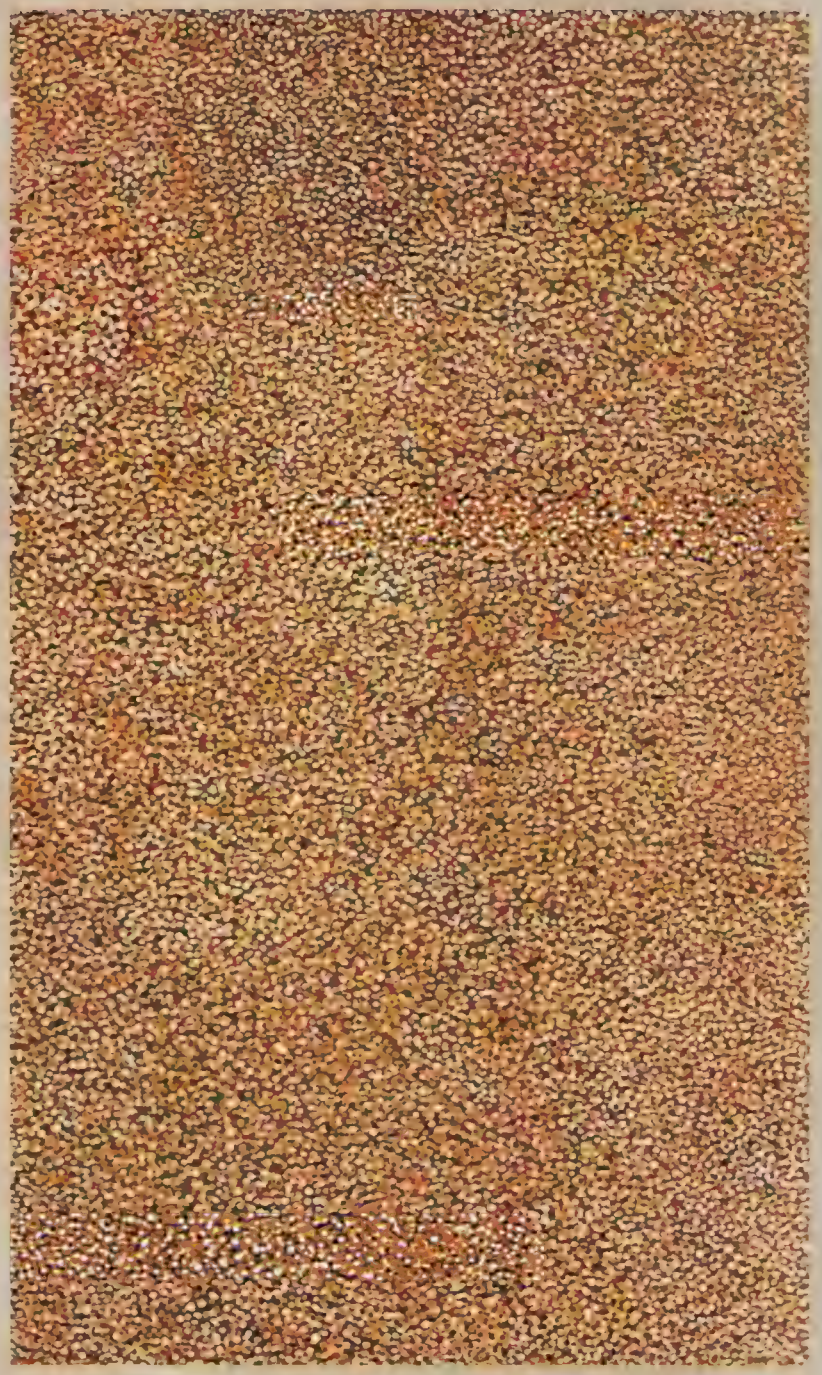
their work and what is happening in the marketplace. Contemporary art is an area where if risks are taken and if luck is on your side, there could be great rewards, perhaps a decade later on.

The investing collector of contemporary art has the opportunity to get to know a great deal about practising artists because they are actively producing work. This is what makes collecting art so much more interesting than buying shares.

An interesting way to collect is to buy an individual's work over time and to notice what is happening in his career as revealed in catalogue notes. Over the years, the collector will become familiar with the artist, noting his awards, his consistency of production, his major exhibitions. Artist and collector may never meet but a keen investor will know every detail of the artist's work and through this observation will learn how to choose the best. Remember also that differences in scale and media can affect the price and that not all work is good work. It is also essential to know if the work in question is representative of a part of an important series or stage in the artist's life.

In Australia, the work of famous deceased artists such as Arthur Streeton, Tom Roberts, Fred McCubbin, Margaret Preston, Fred Williams, Ian Fairweather and Rupert Bunny command six figure sums. But established living artists such as Sidney Nolan, Albert Tucker, John Percival, Arthur Boyd and Brett Whitely can also achieve similar prices with major works. Other established artists such as Colin Lancely, John Olsen, Justin O'Brien, Jeffrey Smart, Richard Larter, John Wolseley, Rosalie Gascoigne, Ken Unsworth, David Aspden, Sydney Ball, Dick Watkins, John Coburn, Peter Booth, Imants Tillers, Juan Davila, Mike Parr and James Gleeson have work with prices that usually fall somewhere in the tens of thousands of dollars range. But it is well to remember that different works from the same artists can vary widely in price. Media, scale and quality of the work are the determining features of price. Brett Whitely's **'Flame Tree Port Villa'** sold recently at Sotheby's for A$55,000, while at the same auction his **'Sketching at Bondi'** sold for A$104,500.

Artists whose work has emerged as significant to Australian art in the past two decades and which can be purchased from about $15,000 and upwards includes



that of John Nixon, Robert Boynes, Paul Partos, Mickey Allen, Vivienne Binns, Tim Johnson, Mandy Martin, Vicki Vavaressos, Joe Furlonger, Gareth Sansom, Susan Norrie, Dale Frank, Jenny Watson, Bill Henson, Lyn Boyd, Anne Zahalka, Paul Boston, Tim Maguire, Bernard Sachs, Richard Dunn and Peter Tyndall.

For those who like a challenge, there's the whole range of work coming from artists in their early twenties and those of all ages who have recently left art school. This work is often very affordable and it is worth keeping an eye on exhibitions at the colleges and smaller fringe galleries where such work can be seen. Many of the young artists bought by the Australian National Gallery for the Philip Morris Art Foundation in the last decade as well as the winners of the Moet and Chandon Fellowships have subsequently proved to have been good investments.

Sculpture is just beginning to interest Australian investors and at this explorative stage prices are often undervalued. This position contrasts considerably with that overseas, particularly in the United States where sculpture is a strong collecting area. Pre-eminent sculptors such as Bertram Mackennal, Clement Meadmore and Robert Klippel command the top prices. A small bronze of Bertram Mackennal's famous Circe of 1893 was recently priced at A$95,000, while Meadmore's bronze 'Extent' of 1981 was priced at A$26,000. The work of distinguished artists such as Guy Boyd and Danila Vassilieff ranges from $5,000 to $10,000. Contemporary artists of interest to those who wish to collect sculpture include Bert Flugelman, Tony Bishop, Hilarie Mais, Marea Gazzard, Geoffrey Bartlett, John Davis, Alex Tzannes, Margaret Dodd, Paul Juraszek, Robert Morris, Tom Risley, Victor Meertens, Bronwyn Oliver, Ken Reinhard and Tony Coleing.

Judging by overseas trends, many areas in the crafts in Australia are very undervalued, particularly the work of high quality ceramists and glass artists whose excellent work can be purchased from hundreds of dollars, where similar work in the United States and Japan would cost thousands. Here in Australia the level of professionalism at its best is on a par with if not better than overseas work. Ceramic artists of distinction include those of the older generation such as Col Levy, Peter Rushforth, Milton Moon, Alan Peascod, Les Blakeborough, Harold Hughan and Klytie Pate. More recent arrivals on the scene include Greg Daly, Stephen Benwell, Jeff Mincham, Toni Warburton and Diogenes Farri. In glass, there's Brian Hirst, Warren Langley, Stephen Skillitzi, Klaus Moje, Richard Whiteley, Maureen Cahill, Richard Morrell, Robert Knottenbelt, Velta Vilmanus and Gwen Ford.

Investing in the art market may look daunting, but in fact the scene is not as treacherous as it might appear. Australian commercial galleries are very open and welcoming. Gallery directors are genuinely interested in helping new buyers and have little of the hauteur that sometimes is so off-putting in the up-market galleries of the big art centres of the world, like London and New York. Newcomers to the marketplace in Australia need not fear that they will be seen as foolish if they know little about art. Willingness to learn is the key to every door. The experts are there. It is in their own interest to help you establish your investment collection, whether you choose painting, antiques or craft objects.

**Marie Geissler**

***Above left: Peter Booth:*** *Valley in a snow storm, 1989, oil on canvas. (Courtesy Deutscher Brunswick Street, Melbourne)*

***Above: Emily Kame Kngwarreye:*** *Untitled, 1991 acrylic on canvas. (Courtesy Gabrielle Pizzi Gallery, Melbourne)*

***Left:*** *Wedgwood vase c.1800 (Courtesy Powerhouse Museum Sydney)*

# AUCTION PRICES

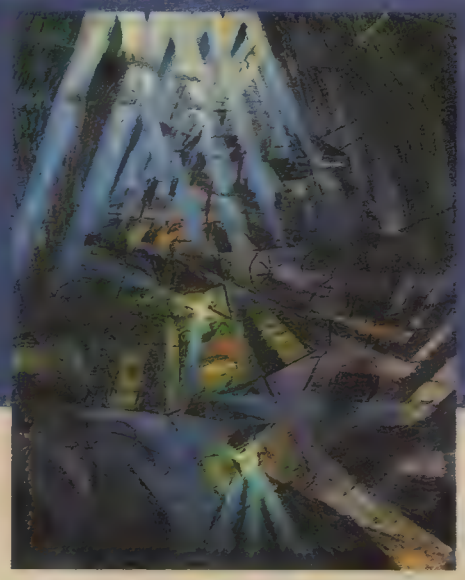
***Top right:*** *A late 18th Century Boulle tea caddy of bombe form. Lawsons, Sydney, September 1989. Sold for $2,500.*

***Right: Carlo Tononi,*** *Italian cello, formerly the property of Pablo Casals. Christie's, London, April 1991. Sold for £143,000*

***Left: Marie Louise Vigée Lebrun,*** *Portrait of the Marchioness of Wellesley, dated 1791, Rome. The Elizabeth Parke Firestone Collection, March 1991, Christie's, New York. Sold for $US781,000.*

***Lower right: Tom Risley,*** *Still Life with Medium Yellow. (Courtesy Ray Hughes Gallery). Sold March/April 1991 for $9,000.*

***Lower left: Brett Whiteley,*** *Hill End. Christie's, Melbourne, April 1991. Sold for $132,000.*



Aquí me pinté yo, Frida Kahlo, con
la imagen del espejo. Tengo treinta
y un años de edad y mi nacimiento
cuarenta, y sólo la Revolución Mexicana

***Top left:*** *An 18th Century Georgian mahogany wine cooler on stand. Lawsons, Sydney, November 1989. Sold for $6,200.*

***Top right: Umberto Boccioni,*** *Le Forze di una Strada (1911). Christie's, London, June 1991. Sold for £3.5 million*

***Left: Bruno Zack,*** *Bronze and ivory art deco sculpture. Lawsons, Sydney, May 1991. Sold for $10,000.*

***Right:*** *Britain's Danish Hussar Regiment soldiers in original box. Lawsons, Sydney, December 1989. Sold for $900.*

***Lower left: Edgar Degas,*** *Racehorses (1875-78). Christie's, London, June 1991. Sold for £6,050,000*

***Lower right: Frida Kahlo,*** *Self Portrait with Loose Hair. Christie's, New York, May 1991. Sold for $1,650,000.*

# Sir Tom and the Artists of the Round Table

***or Liberté, Fraternité and a certain new Egalité***

*You're an accountant. Account for yourself,'* demanded the incorrigible **Zero Mostel** of the hapless **Gene Wilder** in their cult film, **The Producers.** The Australian accountant **Tom Lowenstein** has accounted for himself with honour. The respect and affection of a very large proportion of Australia's artists account for his valuable service to art and artists.

To explain this story it is necessary to first acquaint you with an old and much loved legend told around Australian hearth fires to pass the long winter evenings and to cheer despondent artists at the end of the financial year. Here is the storyteller, draw up a chair, the legend goes something like this:

'Once upon a time, in what seemed like medieval days, there was a large sea-bound kingdom called Australia. Here the inhabitants struggled along faced only with the usual Acts of God such as droughts and floods, fires, famines, cyclones and plagues; and the usual warts of mankind such as greed and envy, aggression and pollution, to name only a few. This was all painfully familiar but it was generally accepted fairly philosophically as being indicative of *la comédie humaine.*

One memorable day, as the good citizens were stumbling about as usual, engaged in maintaining their individual strategies of survival in this cheerfully imperfect society, fate dealt them collectively a savage blow. Suddenly a mighty and terrifying monster took up residence in their country and started ravaging the land. This monster went by the long and lugubrious title of **The Deputy Commissioner of Taxation.** The residents quaked with fear. This was very different to battling the elements or even each other. This was a mysterious and implacable force, powerful and far-reaching. There seemed to be no possible means of escape.

Each year the mighty fire-breathing monster demanded his annual sacrifice. Each householder would put out his half ton of hay, his six casks of mead or, if things were bad, a plump daughter or a favourite son.

Soon the ravening monster would appear voraciously chomping through the sacrifices, pausing only to glare suspiciously or give a fiery blast at a householder whose sacrifice seemed a little frugal.

As the monster passed, each householder would rush inside, bolt the doors and with trembling hands pour himself several quick draughts of mead. Then, dropping on his knees, he would pray desperately to his favourite gods that he might survive and find the means to pay next year's sacrifice.

But sad to relate, those with the worst problems were a motley crew of fiscal derelicts known as artists. The listener to this tale must understand that these poor tormented beings were actually mutations; the result of an unfortunate experiment whereby they were gifted at birth with great artistic talent, and, in inverse proportions, deprived of all financial understanding.

When they put out paintings for their annual sacrifice, they would find the monster had chewed them up and spat them out. Sometimes they would hear, with trepidation, his angry moans of indigestion.

Soon they started getting impatient smoke signals from the dragon. 'If I don't get my annual sacrifice soon,' he puffed, as he sharpened his teeth and threw another log down his fiery throat, 'I don't actually see you with much of a future.'

The artists fell into a state of panic. Things had indeed come to a pretty lethal pass. They surveyed their weapons. A few hairy brushes and several rusty palette knives. They could barely defeat a pussycat. They grew even more bewildered and confused than was their wont, until one with more peasant sense than the rest said, 'What we need is a champion to fight for us.' They immediately summoned the town crier and sent a message throughout the land calling for an art-loving hero.

For a long and suspenseful time there was no response and then came the unforgettable day, when out of the sunrise, his coat of armour glittering, his sword sharpened, rode the bold **Sir Tom.** With heroic visage and stout heart he came galloping to the rescue of the artists.

As this Sir Tom had a quick mind as well as a sharp sword, he realized that if you kill one monster another will soon take its place. So being of a rational disposition and endowed with a great deal of personal charm, he was able to reason with the dragon. 'Look,' he said, 'no-one is trying to cheat you of your annual sacrifice. You just have to understand that artists are weird people who need to be understood.'

'Why don't they get a proper job?' grumbled the dragon.

'Just leave it to me Your Dragonship, I'll get them in order, and you'll get your dues.'

The bold, brave Sir Tom took over the grey and muddled affairs of his artists and soon had them in shining order. A new peace was felt throughout the land. As their fears subsided, the artists painted better paintings, the good citizens felt their spirits uplifted by this rich new profusion of art and the dragon stopped having indigestion. In the fanciful way of legends, rumours started to circulate that they all lived, more or less, happily ever after.

---

Like most legends there is a basis in fact and the real (or unreal) story goes something like this:

On a crisp and sunny winter's day this year, an intoxicating day of the kind that makes Sydney famous, a crowd of some hundred people flew from every state and gathered at Luccio's, a popular Italian restaurant in Paddington. They were a group of artists and their families and they had come to honour a much loved and much needed man, the highly skilled and exuberant accountant and art lover, **Tom Lowenstein.**

One rarely sees such a huge group of artists together, all artistic differences forgotten in a spirit of good-humoured *fraternité.* The wine flowed and the pasta bubbled and laughter was heard in the land.

***Opposite page:*** *L to R standing: Australian artists Frank Hodgkinson, Brian Seidel, Col Levy, John Firth-Smith, Helen Sharp, John Coburn, Neil Taylor, Sandra Leveson, Ann Thomson, Hilary Mais, Sylvia Lowenstein, Colin Lanceley, Tom Lowenstein, Margaret Woodward, Victor Rubin, Kellyn Alder, Ken Johnson, Louis James*

***L to R sitting:*** *Maria Kucyinska, Tim Storrier, Luccio, Victoria Blackman, Charles Blackman, David van Nunen*

*Among the outstanding paintings hanging in the offices of Tom Lowenstein, accountant*

***The Eye of the Storm*** *John Firth-Smith*

***Night Fishing - Port Jackson*** *Frank Hodgkinson*

***Riches of the Earth*** *John Coburn*

Artists have always subsidised the arts. They frequently give their services in the cause of art and of course, they subsidise their own art, for in their 'improper' jobs they work far beyond the 9 to 5 routines of most employment and in their early years and even later they will endure working conditions and hours of work that would cause any union to call a strike.

The history of the needs of artists and the needs of society for the arts is a complex one that resounds with the changing values of the human race. We live now in an intensely materialistic world. Artists have to survive. Essentially, a true equation between art and money can never be made. So an almost surreal compromise is structured, affected by many fringe conditions such as time, fashion or publicity. Often the basic needs of the artist and society are not properly considered.

What artists don't need is financial stress. What they do need is a sense of security and order in their lives. In recent years a little attention has been given at last to the special requirements of artists. The Australia Council supplies a certain number of grants, there are various Fellowships and there are now specialists, for example in arts law, copyright, marketing, promotion and other areas, to ensure the commercial survival of the artist. Public Lending Rights bring some compensation to writers. We are making a small progress. The expertise of a Tom Lowenstein offers a new security to artists in their commercial life.

The artists at the unique luncheon celebration of our story are all with Tom Lowenstein who is much more than an accountant. He is a sympathetic friend, a knowledgeable guide and a champion for art and he is one of the rare people who understand their problems. Perhaps one might say he is rather like a financial psychiatrist. Artist **Charles Blackman** supports this theory. 'Artists confess to him.' says Blackman, 'and he really listens to them because he believes in them. Then he looks after them. He's changed many things. He cares about the rights of

artists. He's brought new values into the financial world.'

Artist **Colin Lanceley** thinks of him as part of the family. 'He's really made life possible for the artists. He is our go-between. He has actually taken on a pioneering role in this country to the benefit of all artists. He's taken up issues. He can hold the dialogues we could never attempt. He moves easily in the financial world and few people in this world understand the way we live and work and the inconsistency of our incomes. Tom is civilizing both sides. And for himself, he's made art his spiritual faith as well.'

By now Lowenstein knows every possible way an artist can legally live with taxation and how to clarify their finances. He is like a one-man Arts Council. His artists all say he has brought them a sense of *liberté* they never quite knew before. 'Artists account for 5% of my income and 75% of my involvement,' says Tom.

Tom Lowenstein has offices in Sydney and Melbourne and surely never before have such dry financial chambers sung with such a blaze of colour and such an atmosphere of creativity. This is a departure. To find the equivalent of a first-rate contemporary art gallery in accountancy offices turns convention on its ear. And about time. Lowenstein is interested in change. He changes our perceptions of the money world and their perceptions of us. He demystifies it. He says it can live alongside art to their mutual benefit.

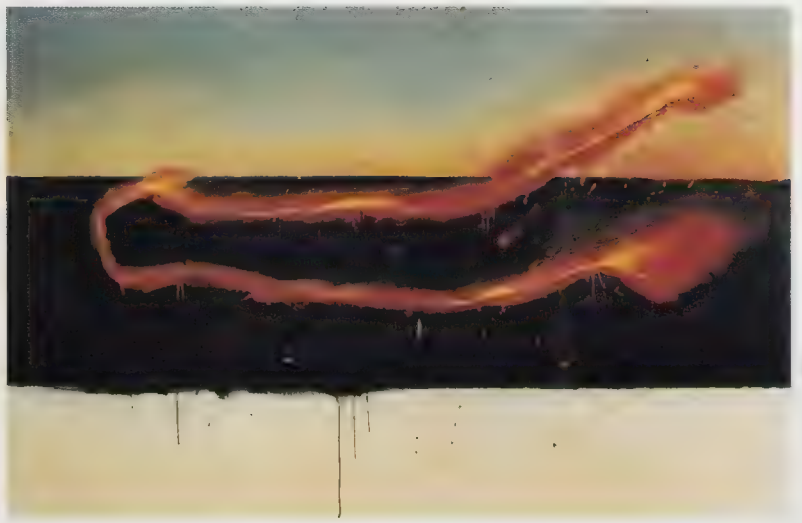
Witty and irreverent Melbourne artist **Caroline Williams** says, 'Tom is so acute, he's the Australian art world's answer to the Gnomes of Zurich. He's tough and tender and a sort of Yiddisher Godfather.'

Artist **Tim Storrier** is another of Tom's admirers. 'Tom is a rare man with a complex background, but he projects a marvellous air of optimism about him. He takes on the cares of artists with generosity. We didn't realize how much we needed Tom until he became part of our lives.'

Tom's dynamic wife of over 30 years, Sylvia says the great thing about Tom is his wicked sense of humour. That may well be the secret of his social success with the artists.

Tom collects works of art and has built up some of his collection by offsetting fees for paintings. They are invariably fine paintings. The artists ensure they will shine in the company of artists. Visitors to the offices must wonder if they are in the right place. The staff love the paintings and will, at the drop of a hat, take you on a guided art tour. Tom's well-trained son, Evan, is part of the business and is looking after many of the younger artists.

Some of Tom's artists not in the photograph include John Olsen, Brian Dunlop, Peter Booth, Robert Jacks, Rod Milgate, Andrew Sibley, Mickey Allen, Alun Leach-Jones, David Rankin, John Wolseley, Geoffrey Makin, Caroline Williams, Margaret Olley, Michael Johnson, Kevin Conner, Mandy Martin, Robert Boynes and many others,



***Arm (will)*** *Tim Storrier*

***Naughty Children*** *Charles Blackman*

including a lot of younger artists. The catchline among artists seems to be not so much 'can I afford to employ Tom Lowenstein?' but rather, 'can I afford not to employ him?'

And what has all this done for Lowenstein himself? 'The artists have brought a new kind of sanity into my life,' he says. 'It's the financial world that's insane.'

'I've seen him expand in humanity over the years,' says Charles Blackman. 'You don't see many expanded human beings in life.'

**Nadine Amadio**

# MOET AND

The prestigious **Moet and Chandon Fellowship** means glamour, high profile and controversy for those who are the fortunate winners. Valued at some $50,000, it is the nation's most coveted art award for emerging artists. The award is made to entrants aged between 20 and 35 years.

Since its inception some five years ago, the Moet and Chandon Australian Art Foundation has also generously offered corporate support for the arts through a $50,000 acquisition grant. Each year the state gallery that opens with the show receives the grant. Its purpose is to fund the purchase of the work of younger artists.

With the funds, the National Gallery of Victoria has added to its collections with work by Jon Cattapan, Stephen Bush and Bill Henson. The Queensland Art Gallery has acquired work by Jay Younger, Judy Watson, Gordon Bennett and Eugene Carcheseico. The Art Gallery of New South Wales has made purchases of John Nixon and Brian Blanchflower and the Art Gallery of Western Australia has acquired paintings by Hicky Allan, Ian Bettinson, Chris Fitzallen, Margaret Morgan and Petra Turner.

In addition, the Foundation organises a touring exhibition of the work of the 20 or so finalists for the Fellowship awards. This show is seen in all the major state galleries at varying periods during the year and it has been estimated that in excess of 200,000 see the show annually.

For the finalists, this public exposure has had varying effects. For a few it has meant more sales, but for the majority the greatest benefit is the confidence that comes from recognition and knowledge that their work is being seen by a wide section of the gallery viewing public.

But what has the award meant to the first five Fellowship winners Susan Norrie, Joe Furlonger, Elisabeth Kruger, Hollie and this year Gordon Bennett? Born in the fifties, these artists grew up reaping the benefits of enlightened changes in attitudes to the arts.

In the past artists were less fortunate. Recognition usually came later in life; and then after considerable struggle and hardship. During formative years such artists had to contend with an environment less sympathetic to their plight. True, there were occasional grants from public funding bodies, but no overseas residencies. Only a handful of institutions took art education seriously. And there were few commercial galleries or magazines. State galleries were less inclined to collect young contemporary artists and touring international art exhibitions were rare.

Most Moet winners agreed that the period overseas on the Fellowship was of enormous value to their careers and worked somewhat like a sabbatical. Time away to explore areas of personal interest in circumstances that guaranteed economic security. All but Hollie had been to Europe before. These trips were for short periods, however, and in circumstances where work undertaken was not largescale, but rather small and sketchy.

The free accommodation and studio facilities at Epernay provided by the Moet and Chandon estate, allowed more substantial work to be undertaken. Epernay is in the Champagne district of France, just south of Riems. All artists also used the studio as a home base, travelling widely at varying intervals to explore their particular interests.

Most spent the time self-absorbed, not seeking out other artists. Instead, the priority was to experience for themselves the landscape and the cultural artefacts and the art collections of Europe. Sometimes seeking out unconsciously or otherwise things

# CHANDON

*Susan Norrie*

***Susan Norrie***
*'Fete'*

***Left:* Hollie**
***Right:* Hollie**
*Conversations and this river runs between us*

that inspired the great artists of the past - artists from whom they had learned only at second hand - through textbooks and magazines.

In particular, many felt they were better able to understand why various European artists had painted the way they did. Elisabeth Kruger commented that she was incredibly moved by actually seeing the facades of Monet's cathedrals and experiencing how the colours and shadows worked at varying times of the day.

Several stated emphatically that 'Australian artists had nothing to feel ashamed of', that Australian artistic standards were as good as if not better than many whose work they saw. The Australian contemporary tradition by comparison with the European was seen as more visionary and experimental than the work shown by many artists exhibiting in the top commercial galleries in Paris. Several of the Fellowship winners had great praise for the high exhibiting standards of Australian commercial galleries in general, which they did not always find abroad. Interestingly, some thought their work had little relevance to European markets and felt it belonged in Australia.

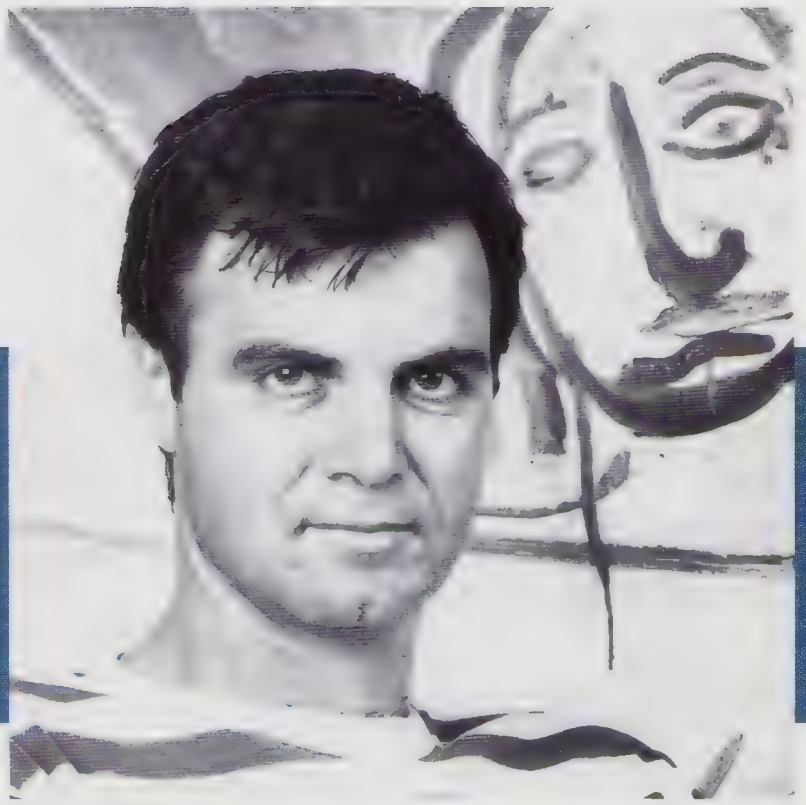
Certainly since the award, the career of the first recipient, **Susan Norrie,** has continued to advance. Norrie, who had already exhibited at the Guggenheim in New York prior to receiving the Fellowship, had a successful solo show in New York last year, with other work exhibited both in Australia and overseas during this period. From her residency in France came the **Objet d'art** and the **Peripherique** series, extending her concern with the subject of art as a commodity.

**Joe Furlonger** felt the village lifestyle he experienced in Epernay highlighted the similarities between life in Australia and that in France. He felt the rural culture, unlike that of Paris, was more real and of considerable benefit in helping him come to terms with French history, subject matter and therefore French painting.

He recalled several incidents when he had a vivid sense of discovering the inspirational source of subject matter that had puzzled him in French painting. Describing a pushbike race in an obscure village he marvelled: 'The vision of a town closed off for a secondrate pushbike race with the colour of the race, the riders and bunting gave me an immediate understanding of the imagery of Leger for the same subject'. There was also his encounter with the grand tapestries at Angers. There he sourced an inspiration for Matisse's figures, in the large flattened figures of the woven design. It gave him great pleasure to think that these probably originated in folk tradition, a subject very close to his heart.

Representation has been a predominant concern of Furlonger's work. And his experience in the British Museum of the great sculptures of Greece, with their idealised proportions, features and expressions, was a profound experience for him. Again of importance to the subsequent development of his figurative work was the impact of the Pieta images and paintings of Bellini and Tintoretto in Venice. He came across these almost by chance in the local academia and churches there. He said: 'I like the immediacy and contemporariness of the recorded images of those times. For example, in the history paintings of the 1600s, the same shaped bread illustrated in these, you can see in the markets today.'

**Elisabeth Kruger** combined her Fellowship with 3 months as artist-in-residence in the Australia Council's Visual Arts/Craft Board studio in Besozzo near Lake Maggiore. As an artist who began her career making quilts, a continuing preoccupation with Kruger has been decorative design and sensuality. In Europe it was the highly sumptuous expression of court culture of the Renaissance and later that were of great interest to her. The paintings of Titian, Corot and Courbet were both memorable and moving. Kruger commented that she painted beautiful surfaces and images inspired by such masters as a way of bringing these marvellous visual experiences into an Australian context.



***Above: Joe Furlonger.***

***Joe Furlonger:*** *Deposition 1990, oil on canvas*
*[courtesy Ray Hughes Gallery]*

***Left:Elisabeth Kruger***
***Below: Elisabeth Kruger***
*The last of the cool skies*

Kruger also pursued a private passion - her interest in gardens. For her, the garden is a symbol of renewal. Reflecting on this, Kruger said: 'I am interested in how we live and how we've changed... In Europe, you can't be sure that a hill that's there is in fact a real hill... There's no way you can tell the original shape of the landscape... It's all been reshaped, renewed.' For Kruger, the landscape in Europe was like a garden.

It was also a place where pattern is played out in decorative plantings. A high point of her stay was a visit to the chateau of Villandry near Tours in the Loire Valley where the extensive gardens, tended by 6 gardeners, are planted in vegetables, not flowers. Reminiscent of Renaissance gardens, she described them as quilt-like, patterned by discreet areas of cabbages, lettuce, peppers, carrots, marrow, beets or spinach.

Roses were featured on corners, topiary was used to decorate and hedges to demarcate the varying areas and levels of the garden.

The large island on Lake Maggiore was another garden where Kruger particularly enjoyed the unusual. Here she was enchanted by the sight of white peacocks roaming freely in a garden in which a stunning feature was a 30 foot wall espaliered with a combination of flowering roses and fruiting lemons.

For Queensland artist **Hollie,** the Moet Fellowship gave her the opportunity to visit the studio of sculptor Barbara Hepworth in St. Ives, Cornwall. A long time admirer of Hepworth, Hollie found this rekindled her love of sculptural form and since that time her work has begun to explore a more three-dimensional format.

Hollie also spent considerable time exploring pagan spiritual sites in Greece, Italy, Brittany in France and Britain. She enjoyed the physicality expressed in the weathered stone surfaces of monuments to these ancient meeting places. Hollie's exhibition from this time, 'Unsettled Times', reflects her disquiet and desire to move away from subjects of the past. Deeply affected by the 'horrendous' pollution of Europe, this work is confrontational and emotionally charged. She says: ''The Europeans thought my work too aggressive, too crude and confrontational.' However, she was largely unconcerned by this criticism. Made from plywood cutouts and roughly carved, they are stuck together as single figure paintings and stridently coloured.

For 1991 Fellowship winner **Gordon Bennett,** the trip away follows hard on the heels of the few months he spent in Europe last year, looking at the Van Gogh Centenary exhibition in Holland. Says Bennett: 'This trip comes after six years of intensive work, it will be good to have a break and look at things afresh.' On his return trip to Europe, Bennett plans to see the work of Piet Mondrian and Edvard Munch. Like fellow surfer Joe Furlonger, he also intends dedicating time to surfing the beaches of the west coasts of Portugal and France.

Undoubtedly, one of the great benefits of travel is the opportunity to detach from the obsessive rituals of everyday life and gain through the stimulation of new environments and new experiences. For all the Moet and Chandon winners this has inevitably been the gain. However, Australian culture is no longer rooted solely in Europe but is one increasingly concerned with its own Aboriginal people and the cultures of the Pacific rim. And while Moet and Chandon have taken a vital corporate initiative in promoting the visual arts of Europe to Australians, the direction they have taken is only a first step in widening the vision of our artists. The next is perhaps for a local corporation and must surely be to promote a more global vision, beginning with those cultures in our own region ... perhaps a year visiting key Aboriginal centres in Australia or an extended stay in say Japan, the Americas, Hong Kong, Indonesia, New Zealand, Malaysia or Vietnam.

**Marie Geissler**

***Above:* Gordon Bennet**

***Below:* Gordon Bennett** *Self portrait (But I always wanted to be one of the good guys)*

# CREATIVE RETREATS

The longing for a place apart, a place free from interruptions where ideas have time to develop in privacy and peace, is inherent in the psyche of every creative person.

Technology is making our everyday lives even more subject to invasion as fax messages spill from our machines and modems link us to the world.

But there are these 'other places' both in Australia and overseas where the writer or the artist can find that precious time out.

The Australia Council, through its Visual Arts/Craft Board has a **Professional Development of Artists** program which offers grants and overseas residencies to eligible people. The studios available are located in New York, Berlin, Barcelona, Besozzo and Siena in Italy, Tokyo, Paris and London.

According to the Council, you must have 'a history of professional achievement, a demonstrable commitment to work and be able to demonstrate how the opportunity to work overseas would contribute to your professional development'.

Some of the residencies are for three months, others for a year. Vivienne Binns spent three months in Tokyo. A booklet giving full details of overseas development grants is available from the Australia Council, PO Box 74, Chippendale, NSW 2008.

You can also write to the Literature Board of the Australia Council if you wish to find out about the Keesing Studio in Paris where Antoni Jach stayed.

There are several Australian residencies for writers.

The **Katherine Susannah Pritchard Writers' Centre** is at 11 Old York Road, Greenmount, WA 6065.

In Tasmania, there is the delightful cottage at Kelly Steps, Hobart. Contact the **Tasmanian Writers' Union,** GPO Box 783H, Hobart 7001. Staying in this cottage does not require you to provide evidence that you have 'a commitment to work' or an impressive track record. It can in fact be rented for days or weeks at a time. At the moment the rates are from $130 to $160 a week, depending on whether you need one bedroom or two.

**Varuna** at Katoomba on the Blue Mountains, where Dr. Michael Sharkey stayed, is the **Writers' Centre for the Eleanor Dark Foundation Ltd.,** 141 Cascade Street, Katoomba NSW 2780. Those who wish to stay and work at **Varuna** should apply directly to the Foundation.

# A RESIDENCY AT VARUNA

Days and nights at Varuna, the writers' centre, are exquisitely hallucinatory. In midsummer, mists wrap the houses and grounds so trees are still, weighty blurs, gradually revealing damascened limbs and leaves as the clouds thin and part. In the semi-darkness, streetlights glow like Chinese lanterns seen through walls of shifting gauze. The moon's an aspirin floating in a glass, and roofs, walls, fences are dark aquarels against a ground that changes through from ultramarine to seagreen and soft aqua when the sun's first beams switch tones to glowing reds and whites and greens. The bowerbirds swoop low between ground-cover while the currawongs' loud jargon urges youngsters into flight. At such times it is good to be alive, to work with lights on while the garden spills to dawn.

Given a choice, I picked the northern studio with windows all around, to feel the pleasure of some hours undisturbed before the world woke, when I passed four months alone from summer to autumn at Varuna. Undisturbed? A welcome derangement or relocation of ideas brought me back to my own senses in that house and in that garden, an abandonment of fiddly daily routines that get in the way of writing. At Varuna the world of supermarkets, television, radio, the telephone, newsagents and real estate agents seems absurd. Just as it seems a waste of time to sleep when so many factors encourage pleasurable work distractions, like walking to town for food or the papers fell into place. Far better to make for the gorges and the bush, or stroll past houses that the miners and the railway workers built when the district opened up in a previous century, or the mansions of the magnates, who discovered local tourism and couldn't bear to let others steal the march. Varuna is a house such as tourists might pause and gaze at. It does not impress with sheer size, and it eschews the vulgar facadism of hotels and reconstituted earlier styles, which more recent mountain resorts and guest houses love to sport. It is a plain two-storey house, constructed on predominantly straight lines, but paying more than lip service to the concept that the eye is happier with a curve than a straight line. A top floor bow of windows glasses in the former balcony; a rear wall bends around the interior winding staircase. The chrome yellow tint of the dwelling, picked in white, reflects the light back onto lawns and pathways so the effect is shimmering elegance fringed with verdure on all sides.

Looking up from writing, I watched leaves change colour daily and detach themselves from branches by my window. Sycamores and sugar maples flared, turned jade and red and lit the paths around their boles. Eleanor Dark's favourite sitting-area, Camelot, away from public view behind the house, was ankle deep in crimson maple leaves when I left at the end of April, and the stripped tree towered far above the rooftop.

What was I doing there? Writing of another mountain dweller down the line, a poet lost to view in the rise of literary modernism and expressionism in Australia. David McKee Wright kept a brilliant company of friends, all writers and painters, who found the Blue Mountains the ideal setting for their work while the First World War was moving to its climax. Zora Cross and Margaret Fane, Mick Paul and Dorothy Ellsmore, Hilary Lofting, Hugh McCrae and Christopher Brennan, became more human for me while I travelled every week between Katoomba and the lower mountain sites. Zora Cross interviewed Eleanor Dark at the old Varuna, a weatherboard house which gave way to Eleanor's dream that stands today, halfway between Katoomba railway station and the Jamison Valley ramparts. The house began to take form as World War II loomed; it was built in 1939, a subtle blend of interior and exterior Art Deco and Modern. MacIntosh of the Glasgow School of Art would, I think, have loved the graceful lines of the new Varuna. In the two acres of garden, trees that were old when the first Varuna was built still stand. Eleanor and Eric Dark supplied more lavish bushland corners, bright exotic shrubs, tall trees, ponds, cottage gardens, creepers, interlaced with pebbled paths, stone steps and rockery walls, round a sweeping semicircular drive.

My stay at Varuna was in the nature of a repose in a sanctuary. How wisely Eric and Eleanor planned. The gravelled driveway, sensible sheds and garage, tennis court and walled side garden seemed to me a realisation of the genteel country houses out of Dornford Yates's mannered novels. It fitted with the purr of English motors which in former times swept in from the Cascade Street entrance overhung with foliage, to rest in front of the house. Eric Dark travelled in a Rover: of course. The Australian element is in the riot of banksias, native flowers, eucalypts and the lorikeets, rosellas, cockatoos and the softer coloured members of the parliament birds. The Australian element is also in the intellectual temper of the whole arrangement. The orientation of the buildings and grounds is toward work and contemplation. Eric Dark's office and writing studio is a small room tucked away from the dining room, convenient to every amenity in the house. He could keep an eye on the door for arriving visitors from here. Brass shell cases, mountaineering photographs, bookshelves, walking sticks and the stethoscope hung from the mantle piece reflect his life's engagements. Eleanor's studio is separate from the house, in the orchard next to the tennis-court, removed from prying view. The walls of this ideal study wear dark bookshelves bearing the uniform volumes of the **Historical Records of Australia;** cabinets conceal numerous built-in drawers, designed to hold completed chapters of her work-in-progress. The desk, with its metal pen rest still in place, is etched with cigarette burns, evidence of her absorption in the task of writing. I revere these people. Eric graduated in medicine in time to practise his craft in the operating theatre of a World War; his portrait, wearing the Military Cross ribbon, hangs outside the door to the bedroom I occupied. I fancy his ghost was complex, engaging. I caught myself

***"Camelot" Eleanor Dark's favourite spot behind the kitchen at Varuna***

*Varuna in midsummer 1991*

mentally bidding him 'Good evening, Captain', as I passed en route to bed, though one does not address a superior unless spoken to. I browsed in his medical textbooks and writings in the library downstairs, until the editions were safely tucked from view by the retreat's administrators in time for the official opening; every document is sacred in this house.

Eleanor was present to me in other ways. Her hand guided the architect's. She kept a garden register, recording the aetiology of every plant and shrub, with the date it arrived and the name of its bearer and its source.

The interior of the house has been restored and the effect of light and airy spaciousness enhanced by the glassing of two open areas, and the addition of a piazza to the library and sitting room. The piazza is a modern installation which fulfils the original plan. International decorations are sparse, the verticals emphasised in contrast to the squat vernacular architecture of later Australian interior design. The light Queensland timber panelling, shelving, frames and fitted furnishings accentuate the sense of internal space. Eleanor, who detested housework, built a house which is a joy to move in: built-in cupboards, wardrobes and shelves are at hand in the functional rooms, to bestow stray objects out of view and in their places. The kitchen and pantry hold everything accessible yet discreet: nothing breaks the austere lovely line.

And just as those who question the existence of abstract justice are often the most scrupulously just in their dealings, Eleanor revealed in her writing as well as in her life a ruling passion for restitution and conservation. Her immediate surroundings reflect the same view of her country and its ecology. When, some years ago, I contributed to the Australian Dictionary of Biography an article on her father, the meticulous writer and nineteenth-century Liberal, Dowell O'Reilly, I could not foresee that I would experience at close hand so much evidence of another of his legacies. The mind of Eleanor Dark is modelled in the world she created in her fiction, and in the arresting peace of Varuna.

Ten minutes' walk from the house brings a visitor past the houses of Eric and Eleanor's friends, like Eric and Margaret Lowe, both writers, and straight to the top of Katoomba's main street. Ten minutes' walk in another direction, one has crossed a broad park on the way to the cliffs that ring the Jamison Valley, beset by camera-wielding job-lots of tourists, honeymooners and bushwalkers. Between the polarities of the commercial sphere and the stillness of the remote cave that Eleanor and Eric Dark made their most secret retreat in the mountains' recesses, Varuna's calm is the finest compromise permitting decent living that I know in Australia. Jean Devanny called the place 'a citadel of civilised living': no-one who has spent any time in the house could doubt it. Living there for even so short a time as I spent in early 1991 has enlarged my comprehension. Eleanor Dark, pioneer modernist writer, set high humane standards in everything she touched. Eric Dark's pioneering work in social medicine also compels attention to the surroundings in which he worked: the good doctor's love for his nation, the landform, climate, flora and fauna, and his neighbours and family all come home to the dweller at Varuna. Their son, Mick Dark, in donating the house for the use of future writers has, I think, borne out their vision. It shows a magnificent faith. It is something to have had the honour to live close to the springs of hope.

**Michael Sharkey**

# TOKYO STUDIO

I stayed in the **Visual Arts/Craft Board** studio in **Tokyo** from early March until mid-June this year. Everyone had emphasised that the studio was very small - too small to work in - but I discovered it was quite roomy. It was certainly bigger than the caravan in which I had lived and worked as an Artist in Community in the Central West of New South Wales. One wouldn't want to film a Western in the Tokyo studio or paint a large-scale gallery work, but it was fine for my miniatures, which are about postcard size, and for writing a diary.

It was very comfortable, with everything I needed except a coffee maker. So I bought one and bequeathed it to the use of future occupants.

The building is like a box, or perhaps more poetically like an eyrie, perched at the end of the flat rooftop of the Fujimart Building near Monzen Nakacho station in downtown Tokyo. As the building is six storeys high, the Fujimart Biru is a towering edifice with a 360 degree view of urban Tokyo - that is when the smog clears, which it does after a good blow! There were

what seemed like gale-force winds at least three times whilst I was there, during which I was sure the whole studio was about to be snatched up and blasted away.

My diary notes during the first couple of weeks after my arrival remind me of the effort required to get around a new city where one doesn't speak or read the language. Each morning some hours were required to ascertain destinations and plot routes. Then upon returning to the studio in the evening, I would collapse with exhaustion. This after a day of new discoveries, wrong turnings, walking for miles (despite the extremely efficient subway transport), and being bombasted with new and unexpected stimulae.

When you first arrive in a new city you can't see! You pick out what you need for survival and getting around but for me the first month or so of my stay in Tokyo was characterised by the constant shocks of new sightings when some detail, structure, sign, shop, tree, person or whatever would seem suddenly and only then to come into view. Even when I only consciously saw something for the first time, I knew it had always been there and that I'd passed it or looked in its direction every day since arriving.

The VACB studio is 15 minutes walk from the nearest subway station and from there it's about 15 minutes by train to the Ginza, one of the major centres of Tokyo where there are lots of classy shops, department stores and galleries. Tokyo doesn't have one centre. It has five or six. It's a bit like a multi-headed carbuncle. Each of these major centres has different characteristics and attractions and there are plenty of guide books, tourist magazines and treatises by foreigners to tell you all about them.

My guide book described the area where the studio is as an 'uninteresting area' except for the Fukagawa Edo Museum. I couldn't disagree more. For me it was an extremely fascinating area. I certainly fell in love with the museum which housed a reconstruction of shops, houses, stalls and storehouses exactly as they would have appeared in the early nineteenth century and which is planned so that visitors can actually enter the spaces and try out implements and furniture, but this was only one of the attractions of this very Japanese area of Tokyo.

Of course I haven't talked with every Australian artist who has stayed in the Tokyo studio, but I get the impression that they fall into three broad categories with regard to their focus of interest. Some, in the heat and urgency of developing careers seek contacts, resources and experiences. Some use the studio as a base for travelling to other places in Japan, while others concern themselves with the ambience and culture of the local area.

*Rooftop studio, Tokyo.*

I did a bit of each but essentially concentrated on exploring the local area and discovering what I could of its physical and human character. In this I was greatly assisted by **Rod O'Brien,** an Australian arts writer and journalist who was involved in the setting up of the studio and who lives on the floor below.

Rod is just one of the people who potentially form a web of support for the artist in residence at the studio. The Tokyo co-ordinator is **Sachico Tamai** of the **Australia Japan Foundation.** She, **Ross Westcott,** the director, and others at the Foundation give their help and encouragement, as does the **Lunami Gallery** in the Ginza. This gallery has become another supportive centre for Australian artists through its director Emico Nanikawa and his assistant Toki.

An unexpected aspect of the residency is the standing invitation to each artist from a group of civil servants from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government offices. Each week the artist visits the offices in Shinjuku in the new and tallest building in Japan for an English language session and lunch. This group is very generous to the Australian artists - taking them to dinner, theatre and for day trips around Tokyo.

On the roof outside the studio is a now run-down garden in boxes, pots and plastic containers which must once have flourished. It was tended by the landlord who is now elderly and rarely able to visit it. I met him, his wife, family and some friends at dinner at his place; another tradition for the artist-in-residence, on the fifteenth of each month.

This is the barest outline of what awaits those who are successful in their bid to stay in the Tokyo studio. For me it was an extremely valuable opportunity, the ramifications of which are complex and far-reaching. The overseas studio project is an initiative, I believe, of great credit to Australia and the responsibility falls to visiting artists to nurture it and ensure its continuance.

**Vivienne Binns**

# AUSTRALIAN ARTISTS IN ITALY

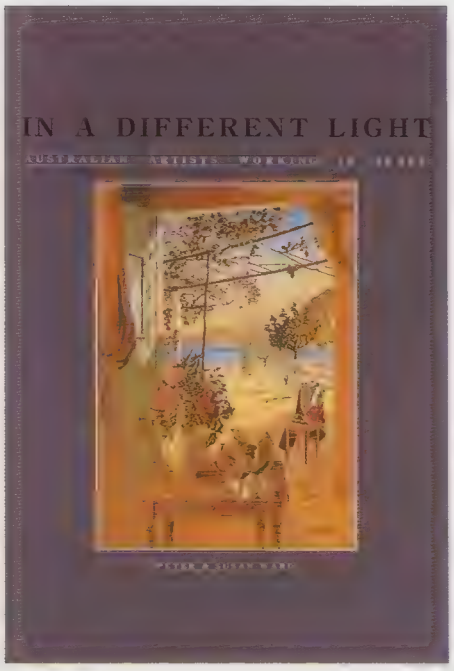
The study at home is full of Italian memorabilia - 200 postcards from every art museum, church, painting and fresco throughout Italy. These were gathered and bequeathed to us by Eva and Maurie Isaacs when they sojourned in Italy over ten consecutive summers. Like many other members of Australia's cultural cognizenti, the Isaacs cherished the company of Justin O'Brien and other 'expatriate' Australian artists during their travels. Their lengthy dinners and famous walks are enshrined in our family snapshot albums. As I write, Justin's painting of a bowl of green pears glows on the kitchen wall beside me. The lure of Italy is well-known in this family as it is to many Australian artists and writers.

In numerous studios on the Continent, particularly Italy and France, Australian artists and writers have been rediscovering the pleasure of separating themselves from local and domestic distractions to concentrate on their work. Peter and Susan Ward recently went to live and paint in Tuscany at the Verdaccio Studios for a period of four months. A superb book resulted from the many detours these two artists took from their work in the studio - visiting the studios of no less than 19 other contemporary Australian artists who were at that time living and working in Italy. What a joy! Just having an excuse to find and talk to these artists, seek out their homes, look at their work and of course share meals and much vino - after all, artists always know the best and cheapest places to eat and the finest museums and markets in town.

***Right: Justin O'Brien,*** *Boy on a terrace, Oil on Canvas*

Susan Ward (Kinealy) is a highly accomplished designer, responsible for ten or more art books produced in Australia including **The Art of the Boyds, John Perceval, Donald Friend, Images of Religion, Artists' Gardens, Lawrence Daws** and **Shay Docking.** Her husband, Peter, is an Australian painter, printermaker and ceramist. Together they produced **In a Different Light, Australian Artists Working in Italy,** a stunning and elegant tribute to the work of these 19 artists. In interviewing the artists, Peter Ward discovered a remarkable similarity in the responses they gave to their reasons for enjoying Italy and working there. For a start most Australian artists, indeed, all who have studied art in Australian schools, are familiar with the Italian masters. An unexpected pleasure for some artists was the recognition that the faces in the streets could have been the exact models for Leonardo, Michaelangelo and Raphael. Justin O'Brien has been delighting his visitors for years pointing this out. Renaissance landscapes suddenly appeared before the artists' eyes and at last they felt truly surrounded by an ancient culture which had never discarded traditional mediums for ephemera or modernity. Italian culture has an integrity which allowed many of the artists to relax and concentrate on their own work away from their peers and critics. And then of course there was that special soft Italian light, hence the title of the book.

Susan and Peter Ward spent the summer of 1990 at Greg Page's Verdaccio Studios. His energy has helped establish a small but vital Italian




connection for Australian art and artists. The studios were established four years ago and are supported by the Australian Visual Arts/Crafts Board and many local Italian cultural organizations. The studios help artists but also assist in building a bridge between the cultures of Australia and Italy. For approximately $200 a week, plus food, the Wards shared the complex and kitchen with seven to ten others, but had a self-contained bedroom and studio apartment. The Verdaccio Studios are surrounded by vineyards and olive groves and in the complex are wineries and an agricultural business. In the distance is the town of San Gimignano, visible from the studio windows. Photographs show the idyllic scene through the studio windows - the ubiquitous blue Tuscan haze. Most Australians who stay at the Verdaccio Studios for any period are frequent visitors to both Siena and Florence, both within an hour by car.

Some of the best established names in Australian art appear in the Wards' book, including Justin O'Brien, Jeffrey Smart, Ken Whisson and Keith Looby. The artists also include those who have come for short stays and who are yet to make their reputation. In matters of style, subject matter and medium they are as diverse as the art community in general. Many left Australia over 20 years ago, and others have worked in Italy for periods and are drawn back again. Lorrie Whiting has been creating collages in Rome for 30 years and Nike Arrighi pursues her work in vastly different aristocratic circumstances than, for example, John Sultana whose studio is two tiny rooms on the fourth floor of a nineteenth century Milanese apartment block. His abstract altarpieces are as aggressive as the constant sound of jackhammers used in his building during renovation.

Beatrice Sheehan has been studying frescoes with Professor Leonetto Tintori for over a year. Tintori has restored and preserved many of the great fresco works of Giotto, Pierro della Francesca and others. Now, ten students each year live and study with him in a jumble of studios attached to his home. It is a difficult medium, painted onto a surface of wet plaster and completed before the plaster dries. While studying, Beatrice undertook a commission for a fresco in Santa Maria Della Pieta, a seventeenth century church in Prato. For her, frescoes are fascinating for their luminosity, the interplay between architecture and the context of the painting, and the possibilities they offer for illusion to dispel the wall structure.

As a painter himself, Peter Ward's text speaks of art in a painterly fashion - not overly analytical yet instructional and interpretive. The recorded artists' statements are perhaps one of the most interesting aspects of the book. Take Stephen Roach for example, a young artist who has now lived in Italy for 8 years. 'Living here is rewarding in the ways I keep discovering layers to meaning and to myself, layers to the possibilities of evil and ugliness, and layers to the existence of beauty and innocence... Beautiful and ugly are words of inherent visual conception and in Italian life they have a palpability and an almost moral concept in how they are often perceived and used. Ugly is negative, bad, wrong, whereas beauty is a gift from the gods. Artists are always somewhere between, like everyone else.' Interspersed with visits to museums and artists' studios, the Wards

***Beatrice Sheehan*** *at her studio at the Fresco school, Prato.*

***John Sultana:*** *Altar to the most good, 1989-90, mixed media on canvas.*

***Peter Ward:*** *Flag design, 1990, acrylic on paper.*

*Long view, the Verdaccio studios, Tuscany.*

worked constantly at their own painting in the rendered stone studios below their bedroom in the tower.

Peter Ward found himself absorbed with the designs of Sienese *contrada* flags. Sections of the cities are divided into *contradas,* each with its own defence role according to medieval custom. Twice a year the **Palio,** a frenetic and intensely serious horse race is held through the piazza. Each of the 16 or so *contradas* has a horse; it is blessed in the *contrada's* church and the jockeys of losing horses are punished. The flags of each *contrada,* symbolising ancient industries and trades prompted Peter to develop his own, and together with Susan's stunningly gilded paintings based on icons and religious imagery, these were exhibited locally in the medieval town of Castellina and all the important local officials attended. The exhibition also included the work of Lisa Roet and Sally L'Estrange, while a local shopkeeper donated boxes of Vinsanto wine.

The book is informed and sympathetic and is a great assistance in answering at least some of the questions of why Italy has such a long and continuing attraction for Australians and in particular Australian artists. After 22 years, Justin O'Brien has stopped analysing this. 'I must have stayed too long, because after living in Rome for two years, I felt I could no longer leave. I must have fallen in love with Italy.'

**In a Different Light, Australian Artists Working in Italy** by Peter and Susan Ward. Published by University of Queensland Press, October 1991, $59.95.

**Jennifer Isaacs**

Photographs by **Susan Ward.**

# PARIS RETREAT

Paris was quiet last September.

Unlike the previous time I was there, in April and May of 1986. In a hectic two weeks on that previous visit Simone de Beauvoir and Jean Genet died, there were bomb scares in the Metro, Chernobyl exploded sending its deadly cloud over Paris on the first of May, and the Americans bombed Tripoli. There was a whiff of hysteria in the air.

Last September however, the mood was very different. Mellow and benign, you could say. All seemed to be quiet on the political front and the weather was spectacularly good with consistent 25 degree days designed to put everybody in a good mood. The Parisians and the omnipresent tourists were flocking to the Luxembourg Gardens and strolling up and down the grand boulevards.

A welcome relief from the very hot August where temperatures had reached as high as 38 degrees. The Australian composer Brian Howard told me that his flat on the top storey of the old wing of the Cité Internationale des Arts had turned into an oven. So hot that it was almost impossible to work, and so hot that his neighbour - a tubby balding pianist - had taken to practising in the nude.

Brian's apartment was hot and noisy but from his balcony he had the most spectacular view of the great city: a 180 degree view, sweeping across the Eiffel Tower, the Pantheon and the Montparnasse Tower. Brian was writing an opera for a Zurich opera company and he was the first person to introduce himself to us when Sallie and I and our 2 month old daughter, Hayley, arrived in the foyer of the Cité Internationale des Arts.

We were taken to the Keesing Studio (in the recently built Annexe of the Cité) which was to be our home for the next three and a half months. It is a quiet and spacious apartment but it lacked Brian's spectacular view. We had a view of the Cité car park; though if you raised your eyes a little you could see

the back of the splendid medieval Hotel de Sens.

The Keesing Studio was generously donated by Nancy Keesing and is administered by the Literature Board of the Australia Council. It is one of 250 apartments which comprise the Cité Internationale des Arts. The idea behind the Cité - to provide studio space for artists from all over the world - was conceived by Madame Brunau, the current director, in the early 1960s.

The Cité is located in the Marais (the *'Marsh'*) which is one of the oldest and most interesting parts of Paris. Residents are within walking distance of Notre Dame, the Pompidou Centre, the Picasso Museum, the Place des Vosges and the Hotel de Ville. They are also only 200 metres away from the rue Francois Mirron, a former Roman highway.

Four homeless tramps slept on cardboard on the footpath near the rue Francois Mirron (the French call tramps *'clochards'*). Apparently they too had been away for their summer vacation during August. Two of them were fat, the other two were thin and they were all either jolly or morose - slapping each other on the back, abusing passers-by, tucking into baguettes or slurping wine out of plastic bottles. They reminded me of Vladimir and Estragon from **Waiting for Godot.**

Dominique Pousset from the Australian-France Association told me a story about her local *clochard* who appeared on national TV showing his skills as a woodsmith. He said, however, that he preferred to live on the streets and beg for his living as there was more variety and greater contact with people rather than work with wood. When she saw him the following day back on the streets asking for money, she said to him that she was surprised to see him now that he was a 'national celebrity'. His reply was that he was back on the streets because he 'couldn't disappoint his customers'.

There are a lot of people asking for money in Paris, especially in the Metro. In 1986, a well-dressed young Frenchman of my age and my height asked me for some money because he had a hole in his shoe, showing me the hole. I showed him the hole in my shoe; he looked a little bashful, but I gave him a few francs anyway: his request was so inventive, his delivery so sincere.

The *clochards* are as much a part of the village that makes up the Marais as are the butcher, the baker and the cafe owner. Finding a good cafe was of utmost importance. I managed to find one, the Cafe Aux Polonais (the Polish Cafe), in the rue Charlemagne. As my father is Polish, I thought it was a good omen. I used to write in the cafe on as many mornings as possible between 7.15 and 9, whereupon I'd walk to the Bibliotheque Historique de la Ville de Paris (the Library for the History of the City of Paris).

To use the library, you need a reader's card. That wasn't so difficult as I was a resident of the Cité. The next stage was tricky though: you had to present yourself at a desk and ask for a reserved place in the library. The attendant would take your reader's card and tell you a number which you would have to write down on a green card. And woe to you if you made a mistake.

The novel I was writing in Paris is about Paris and the library had a lot of useful books. The library was also warm and quiet and gave me a chance to write without Hayley interrupting.

Sallie and I were worried about taking such a young baby to Paris, but Hayley thrived. She received a lot of attention from Parisians in the street and the other Australians who were resident in the Cité: Hayley had Uncle Brian (Howard), Uncle Raymond (Meeks) and Aunty Anne (MacDonald) to play with. Brian dubbed her Princess Bubbles and Raymond gave her a children's book he had illustrated.

One of the great things about living in the Cité was the community feeling that started to develop. We met people whom we liked and became friends with; and they were artists too. By that I mean they valued the artistic life; they upheld the value that a life in pursuit of artistic goals could be a worthy life. Quite a change from Australia, where artistic pursuits are regularly treated with cynicism.

As the weather grew colder in late November the political and social temperature in Paris started to heat up. Secondary school students were demonstrating in the streets over a range of issues: the repressive nature of schooling was one issue, while another was the lack of physical security within schools.

An abandoned radiation test centre forty kilometres from Paris was found to be emitting higher than usual levels of radiation. A goods train carrying flamable liquid in Provence was derailed creating a huge fireball which destroyed part of a village: the scary part was that it happened only one kilometre away from a nuclear power plant.

Also the French Nuclear Authority was threatening to suspend the licences of various nuclear power plants for unsafe working practices. The proliferation of nuclear power plants is one of the few negative aspects to living in Paris.

Lawyers and judges went on strike and one Monday afternoon I saw the CNRS (para-military police) carrying sub-machine guns and wearing belts loaded with tear-gas canisters out in full force surrounding a group of demonstrators. It was one aspect of Paris that I remembered from my previous visits: naked ferocity on display.

The temperature plummeted to zero in early December and on 11 December it snowed in Paris for the first time in eight years. The snow fell all day providing a gloss over all the mundane aspects of daily life. Enterprising film-makers shot a commercial with actors dressed in period costumes conversing under real snow. Even the fake snow-covered plastic Christmas trees outside the local police station were sprinkled with a layer of real snow: the real reinforcing the illusion. Baudrillard would have been pleased.

Then in mid-December it was all over. We returned to Australia: the heat of summer and the cold of a full-scale recession.

**Antoni Jach**

***Right:*** *'Teacups: The Harlequin Set', 1931-2, Oil on pulpboard*

***Below:*** *Wamberal Lake, No. 1 1927-8, Oil on pulpboard*

# GRACE COSSINGTON SMITH

Bruce James

# grace COSSINGTON SMITH

**Bruce James** has done a service to Australian art in his well researched biographical and critical study of **Grace Cossington Smith,** even though he admits in his introduction that 'she is an artist on whom the last word has yet to be spoken'.

Grace Cossington Smith was born in 1892 and died in 1984 - almost all of her 92 years dedicated to painting. She began as a child, 'an adroit student who delighted in drawing', and was still painting at the age of 80.

During those years she recorded what was happening about her - troops marching to World War I, the strikes of 1917, the Prince of Wales on parade, the building of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the development of Sydney's inner heart. But side by side with this documentation of history was a gentler more domestic representation of a very gracious lifestyle enjoyed by the upper middle class of Sydney's respectable North Shore where Cossington Smith lived throughout her life.

She has given us not only family portraits but details which must delight the hearts of social historians - tea-trays and bowls of flowers on windowsills, interiors of rooms, corners of gardens, chairs in bow windows, the Soda Fountain in David Jones' Elizabeth Street store in 1928, smart clothes draped over chairs, ballets and orchestral concerts, landscapes from overseas trips - all the life of a rather privileged group of Australians.

Interesting as the content of Cossington Smith's work is, it is the extraordinary quality of the painting that ensures her position in the history of Australian art.

Bruce James, with meticulous scholarship, examines Grace Cossington Smith's whole body of work from her first exhibited picture *'The Sock Knitter'* (1915) which is a remarkable portrait of the artist's sister 'simply making socks' to 'the astonishing *Still Life with White Cup and Saucer'* which was one of her last works. Of this work James says: 'The transcendent yellow light which suffused and distinguished the world of Grace Cossington Smith has been intensified, heated to a white pitch. The utensil of the title foresakes colour in favour of a ghostly neutrality, not so much a cup-and-saucer as a Platonic pure form.'

Considering the period and the strata of society into which Grace Cossington Smith was born, it is remarkable that she became an artist. But her parents were supportive and allowed her to attend Antonio Dattilo-Robbo's 'art classes for ladies and gentlemen' in Rowe Street, Sydney, where she began in 1910. Two years later her father took her and her sister Mabel to England where Grace attended the Winchester School of Art. The following year she stayed in Germany with friends of her mother and had some private lessons. She returned to Australia in 1914.

Although she painted constantly in the ensuing years and was included in many group exhibitions and gave solo exhibitions and for the most part received excellent reviews, it was not until the late 1960s that the full stature of her work was really noticed and given its true place in the context of Australian and international art.

Daniel Thomas is given full credit by Bruce James for having 'definitely sealed the artist's historical importance in his 1967 article in *Art and Australia'*, and it was from this time onward that Grace Cossington Smith's exhibitions began to occur regularly at the Macquarie Galleries and elsewhere and that her work was included in many mixed and museum exhibitions. It was also not until this period of her life that she knew any commercial success.

In the 1970s as her age began to put limitations on her ability to paint, she 'permitted the almost archaeological disinterment of over fifty years of neglected, forgotten, or deliberately hidden images' - a lifetime of devotion to her own vision of art.

This tremendous body of work might not have been achieved had Cossington Smith followed the traditional path of women of her time into marriage and the raising of a family. As it was she remained Aunt Grace to the children of the family. One niece commented in a television interview that Aunt Grace had made no fuss about painting - other aunts cooked or gardened, Grace painted.

How brilliantly she painted and how skilfully she captured the vivid Australian light is possibly still to be told. Bruce James insists that what he has written is 'an introduction of the most rudimentary kind to an almost intimidatingly complex figure'.

If this large format 188 page book with its multitude of reproductions in colour and its interesting historic photographs is a rudimentary study, then it is one that should nevertheless be in every library. Well researched, indexed, illustrated and printed, Grace Cossington Smith is a highly readable book about a fascinating artist.

**Grace Cossington Smith** by Bruce James, Craftsman House, $90.

**April Hersey**

# PEGGY GLANVILLE-HICKS and the making of the film

A one-hour television film on the life and the music of Australian-born composer **Peggy Glanville-Hicks** has just been completed. Made by a small Australian film company, Juniper Films, it will be broadcast on ABC Television later this year and will heighten the increasing interest being shown in the work of this passionate and powerfully creative woman.

Until comparatively recent times, perhaps as late as halfway through this century, there have only been a handful of strongly creative women composers throughout the entire history of civilization. One of the most outstanding and fascinating of these rare women lived and worked in America throughout the forties and fifties. She was the Australian-born composer Peggy Glanville-Hicks. Although she had an international reputation, not enough has been known about her in this country. In the field of music we have produced many great Australian women interpretive artists, particularly our great singers, but very few great creative talents.

Now her work is being reassessed and a new interest in her music is rising. Performances and broadcasts are taking place and recordings are being made. We are starting to properly realize that Australia has produced a world standard woman composer who lived and worked at a time when being a 'lady composer' (a term Peggy hated) meant that, even to be considered, you had to be 'twice as good as any male composer among your peers'.

Intellectually in the same league as a Virginia Woolf or a Simone de Beauvoir, Peggy was a woman of such talent and passion that she really stands historically as one of the unique creative female forces to emerge in any art form. Australian audiences will be moved and inspired by her unique story of genius and of her courage in the face of tragedy. They will be surprised by the beauty and strength of her music.

We started filming Peggy in her last years. By then we realized we did not have long. She was a fragile ageing woman who had been living on borrowed time. However, she was willing to give it a go and she remained an acid-tongued observer of the musical world and a vigorously caring woman right to the end. We grew to relish the wit and eloquence of her brisk but shredded voice, the fearless, often ascerbic comments and the depth and energy of her feelings. We worried for her and saw that when filming, the sparkle soon faded and she tired easily. Peggy died in Sydney on 25 June 1990 during the course of the production of this film.

We had not fully realised when we started just what an extraordinary woman we were filming. Together with her own memories and her rich lode of eloquent letters, our team visited and interviewed many of her friends and colleagues including two of her oldest and best loved friends.

In Morocco we talked to the friend she called her 'twin', writer/composer Paul Bowles, who recently attained new heights of fame when his book *The Sheltering Sky* was filmed by Bertolucci. In New York we talked to famous American choreographer John Butler who shared her triumphs and who was with her through her time of despair. We talked to composers and musicians who worked with her such as Lou Harrison and John Cape and Yehudi Menuhin, who knew her well, brought us many real insights about Peggy.

A picture began to emerge of a woman who was much more than just an important composer. Australian composer Peter Sculthorpe calls her 'an ideas woman who defined the new world of music'. She was a complex woman who cared more about music in general than her own particular fame as a composer. She was generous, committed and tireless in her efforts to promote contemporary music. She was a compelling writer and used her writing skills to become the formidable champion of young American composers.

In her private life she was a woman of great humanity who loved intensely. Her friends and lovers were made radiant with the depth of her feeling. The more we learned about Peggy, the more stunned we were that such a remarkable woman had lived among us virtually unknown for so many years. You always become obsessed with the film you are making, but we soon realized that Peggy's film was of special importance on many levels.

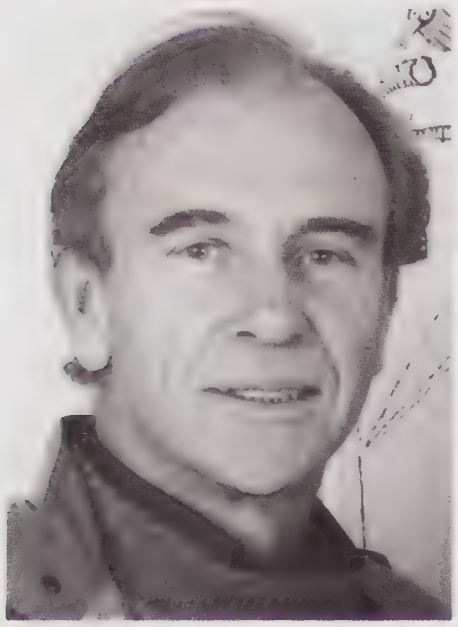
*The young Peggy leaves Australia*

Juniper Films, founded twenty years ago, is a partnership of two outstanding film-makers, John Tristram and James Wilson. They are flexible multi-talented and resourceful as only members of a small film company can be. They are both perceptive and imaginative directors and they are both excellent producers, particularly Tristram whose ingenuity knows no bounds in the service of the film he is making. As well, James Wilson is a gifted editor. Of necessity, this film, titled **PG-H A Modern Odyssey** is particularly reliant on sensitive and musically aware editing. Wilson's brilliant creative editing on this occasion, is his own special tribute to Peggy as well as to the art of innovative film making.

*Above:* ***James Murdoch,*** *Founding Director of the Australia Music Centre*

*Right:* ***James Wilson,*** *Director/Producer/Editor, Juniper Films*

*Lower right:* ***John Tristram,*** *Producer /Director, Juniper Films*



This small company, with some twenty-seven films in their repertoire and a reputation for integrity, has won many major and prestigious awards, usually against films with larger budgets and more substantial back-up. Many of Juniper's films are about the arts. Their films, **First Citizen, Albert Namatjira** and **The Quest of Jimmy Pike** have been screened and acclaimed internationally. This year they won first prize at the American Film Festival with their recent film **Giants of Time.**

Juniper Films also now employs two dedicated and talented young women who are under the thrall of film, Sonia Poorun and Imelda Cooney.

The Executive Producer of **PG-H A Modern Odyssey** was Peter Butler of the ABC. The film was funded by the Australian Film Finance Corporation. One of the important figures concerned with this film is the associate producer and adviser, James Murdoch. The visionary founding Director of the Australian Music Centre and author of two books on Australian music, Murdoch has always been Australia's greatest champion of contemporary music. In this he has a very special kinship to Peggy. Both believed so strongly in the music of today that they both gave almost too much of their lives to promoting it.

In the arts they both reflected that rare sense of modern *noblesse oblige*. In today's terms, it means that if anyone is born with the advantage of a clear vision and a sense of how crucial the arts are to the survival and wellbeing of the human race, then they are obliged to assume the responsibility of fostering and raising the awareness of whatever creative spirit is abroad at that time.

It was his knowledge of her life and music that made Murdoch so valuable to this film. It was Murdoch who brought Peggy home to Australia and treated her with the respect due to such a sophisticated and gifted woman and who supported her with his continuing care and compassion in her declining years. Murdoch is currently writing a book on the life and work of this remarkable woman.

Peggy Glanville-Hicks was born in Melbourne on 29 December 1912. She always intended to be a composer and began her studies locally with conductor/composer Fritz Hart. She left Australia on a one-way ticket when she was 19. In London, she obtained a scholarship from the Royal College of Music and then spent a period of time studying with Ralph Vaughan Williams and leading conductors and musicians.

However, the greatest teacher in Europe at that time was a legendary Frenchwoman called Nadia Boulanger. Her studio was the Mecca for all the hopeful young American composers. They formed a magic circle called the 'Boulangerie'. Although she agreed to teach her, Nadia Boulanger whose sister Lily was a composer, reiterated the many warnings to Peggy that composing was 'no job for a lady'.

Peggy was to become a unique composer. With audacity she rejected the twelve tone system of Europe's great current god Arnold Schoenberg, and she also rejected the heavy harmonic writing of the romantics. She said dense harmonic structures 'were like houses without windows'. Instead she turned to the spacious melodic and rhythmic structure of Indian music which she deeply admired and to oriental music. With Bartok encouraging her, she also sought out the modal music of ancient cultures like the old Greek music for her inspiration.

We were fortunate, during a visit of India's great and spellbinding sarod player Ali Akbar Khan, to catch Peggy discussing Indian music with one of the masters. She said it made her homesick for Indian music.

On another occasion, we filmed Peggy in the studio of leading Australian artist Charles Blackman as he completed a drawing of her. It was a marvellously acute and revealing 'essence' drawing, but Peggy, perhaps not surprisingly, didn't like it.

***Charles Blackman** with **Peggy Glanville-Hicks** and his composer series*

'It's a good drawing', she conceded, 'but it has nothing to do with me.'

In the background of Blackman's studio at this time were hanging his famous Composers Series. This brilliant collection represents Blackman's telling impressions of some twenty-four of the world's famous composers.

Peggy amused herself, and us incidentally, by making cutting comments on the composers. 'And who is that?' she asked imperiously, pointing to a dark brooding face where the eyes burned out of the drawing like twin fires. On being told it was Beethoven, she said scornfully, 'I thought it was a soap manufacturer'. Blackman, to his credit, remained kindly and patient.

Another time we were filming her down at the fish markets to remind her of her marketing days in Greece and she talked endlessly in Greek to a dark-looking fisherman. We didn't have the heart to tell her he couldn't speak a word of Greek!

She never forgot her Greek days. Permanently on Cortisone, and not allowed to drink after her operation, she concocted a mildly alcoholic compromise for herself, a 'dash' of brandy in a large glass of soda. The 'dashes' increased in those last painful years, but again, no-one had the heart to protest. With the brandies at 'elevenses' and again at five, went a large plate of fingers of raw carrots and celery, a trick she had learned in Greece. Many a time we had to stop filming as Peggy, spying a stray carrot slice, promptly munched her way through the next take.

PG-H, as she was known, arrived on the scene in New York at the end of the thirties. She had married a fellow student, a handsome young composer called Stanley Bate who was promising but very unstable. She married him to protect him. Her relationship with him was stormy and sometimes violent. Although they had a lot in common and Peggy loyally always insisted on his talent, they soon parted. They really belonged in different worlds. Her own letters tell the story of her other great loves. The letters also tell of her many frustrations fighting to be a woman composer in a man's world.

Peggy was one of the first creative Australians to tie herself to America. She felt a deep affinity for both countries. She felt they both constituted the 'new world' where the future of music would rest or, perhaps more

*Grand Opera in Athens -* ***Peggy*** *and* ***John Butler*** *taking a bow for* ***Nausicaa*** *- a triumph*

***Peggy*** *with* ***Lawrence Durrell*** *- the Opera* ***Sappho***

accurately, erupt. She was no timid violet. She knew she needed to sharpen herself in a world where the old traditions would be given new life. She found that in the raucous, exciting crucible of energy that was the America of that time. She expanded in this atmosphere. Her friends and associates were the outstanding creative people of her age.

Peggy, between composing, became one of New York's most distinguished and knowledgeable music critics, writing her illuminating reviews on the Herald Tribune together with her admired friend, the great critic Virgil Thomson. She often quoted Virgil mockingly in his deep southern accent, 'Music's a rum go honey-chile, a rum go', and once wrote a very witty piece about Virgil titled 'Thomsoniana'. A daring entrepreneur, she presented concerts and fought to include America's new creative music alongside the exploding world of movies and musical comedy that were becoming the brilliant heart of American culture.

Peggy's large body of composition which includes concertos, sonatas and most music forms, centres on nine works for theatre, her four operas and five ballets. Her operas each had a libretto by a major literary figure. They included Thomas Mann, Lawrence Durrell and Lord Dunsany.

Her music is exciting, approachable and often beautiful. It always has an air of strength and sophistication about it. Today cult pianist Keith Jarrett includes her vigorous Etruscan Concerto in his repertoire and will soon record it. Yehudi Menuhin says he regrets that he has not yet recorded her seductive **Viola Concerto.** Works like her **Letters from Morocco** based on letters from Paul Bowles are alluring and evocative. Her operas have had many productions.

Her grand opera **Nausicaa,** with a libretto by Robert Graves, was to become her greatest success. Directed by her close friend John Butler, it was premiered in Greece in the vast Herod Atticus Theatre to rave reviews. Critics claimed it was 'bony and strong like the Greek landscape'.

Never had a woman composer known such a triumph.

But at the very height of her career, like some tragic myth, Peggy was struck down. She went blind and it was discovered she had a large, life-threatening brain tumour. With characteristic courage, she underwent the long and difficult operation and with a plastic skull and a short time to live, settled on a Greek island. The house she built there is still standing. Against the odds, she did recover, but her life was spent on medication and under the pretence of still working, she knew the fire had gone from her music. For her it was like exile from her own familiar country where she had lived and worked all her life.

Her moving opera **Sappho** with libretto by Lawrence Durrell reflects the arc of her own life from its hopeful beginnnings - 'For I am eager and the flame of life burns quickly' - to her own tragedy, and like Sappho, her final exile - 'A great wind from the dark will blow upon me.'

Peggy finally returned to Australia and found herself living on memories. She was still remarkably poised, alert and wickedly observant. Music was still all of her life. She knew nothing else. She talked of working again. We all knew Peggy's beguiling stories, enjoyed the wit and irony of her company and admired this proud and independent woman, but we knew she would never really compose again.

Peggy left her house, her royalties and all her possessions to music. A trust is now in the process of being set up whereby a series of composers will benefit from her will.

We hope the 'Peggy' film will prove to be a contribution to the new awareness of a great composer.

**Nadine Amadio**

***Peggy*** *in New York*

***Robert Graves, Peggy*** *and* ***John Butler*** *at the World Premier of the Opera* ***Nausicaa***

# inga's imperium

***Robemaster - IRUSAQ***

***Bone bag - IBORIIS***

***Robes of the people - IRUSAQ***

***Poison Brewer's robe - FOREST PEOPLE***

***Red Fetishes - IBORIIS***

My work as an artist has always included a considerable proportion of body ornament, costume and decoration in general. I never put people in my work - costumes are always empty; jewellery has no wearers; artefacts no users. I have always been fascinated by those museum exhibits where you see a miscellaneous collection of items from a particular culture and have to deduce the society from its leftovers, so to speak. And I know that I have been deeply affected by other people's attitudes to my own appearance and dress over the years - most probably another reason for the absence of people in my most personal world.

There is no doubt that bodily decoration reveals a great deal about any given culture. At the very basic level it reflects a general human delight in personal decoration. But it also performs all sorts of functions, not the least of which is the communication of signs and/or symbols representative of the wearer's status, power, respectability, occupation, sexual availability, sanity etc. We tend to believe that we can control behaviour by controlling dress - school and army uniform, corporate dress and peer pressure at all levels of society. Some sort of uniformity is sought by most people (not necessarily consciously), and those who differ from the norm are regarded as odd, reprehensible, or even dangerous. I remember once in the 1950s, at the age of 14, going to church innocently wearing black nylon stockings. After Holy Communion, I turned around to return to my seat and found myself facing a whole congregation united in rigid disapproval of my scandalous legs. I was mortified.

People don't always look very closely at others, but make fast assessments on the basis of appearance. It may work extremely well in very stratified societies, but in ours the edges have become blurred and such judgements can be totally incorrect. For instance, it is generally thought that if you wear punk clothing you are anything from simply delinquent, to degenerate and criminal. Now, this is simply just not so. Most of our major and most extensively damaging crime is perpetrated by neatly-dressed, most respectable-looking gentlemen in business suits! And in my experience, the punk-dressed young are almost invariably gentle, honest, well-mannered individuals, who simply love dressing up.

Of course the greatest sin is to be tattooed. By all means cheat on your income tax, wife, business - but you must never, never have a tattoo. Silly isn't it? The reaction is out of all proportion to the problem of indelibility which is usually given as a reason against it. The only reason I am not tattooed is cowardice; it is painful and I had enough trouble with all my earring holes to be nervous.

I come from a long line of deeply frivolous women. My grandmother, embroideress, politician and local beauty, was once dragged away from a garden party to have her face washed of 'paint'. To the chagrin of the self-righteous washers, the colour was all her own. My mother was the full 1920s' flapper, curled, bobbed, dressed in amazing scarlet-fringed dresses for the tea dances she went to with her three fiancés.

My daughter is an art student and wears elegant layers of grey rags, nose rings and hair like a rag doll in a different colour each week. That's another thing - why is it OK to dye your hair a dull brown, but not in interesting colours? For myself, I don't just wear clothes; I wear costume - always have. I have been through Edwardian, Japanese, African, 60s' hippy rags and a sort of *corps de ballet* effect, among other things. I currently wear black jeans (considered to be extremely immoral in the 50s) and a black leather jacket with an eagle on the back in silver studs - a sort of up-market bikie look, which caused great consternation recently at a textile conference. Many people regard leather and studs as a sign of delinquency and some of the conference people found it extremely hard to cope with, especially on a middle-aged woman whom they had hitherto respected. Not any more!

So, I work in the area that I do, not only because I love body ornament, but also because its anthropological aspects both irritate and amuse me. I'm sure I really didn't have much idea of all this at the time I started working specifically in fictional anthropology. I thought only how nice that I could use my academic training in my work, but in retrospect, past and present experiences have certainly influenced me.

My invented world is called the **Imperium** and consists of at least five discrete societies, and I am working on a sixth: people who make robes from

***Augurer's robe - IBORIIS***

***Book of the robe - IRUSAQ***

***Trader's robe - FOREST PEOPLE***

***Inspector of furs - IRUSAQ***

the tattooed skins of captured slaves who have been bested in single combat. I have three planets, so I can 'discover' new civilizations whenever I want, and can go backwards and forwards in time to different cultures; there is no end to it.

I wear a lot of tribal jewellery - not expensive particularly, just showy. People say to me 'I remember you because of all your wonderful jewellery'. Does this mean that if I take it off I will become invisible? It was perfectly natural for me that my first society was ex-nomadic, carrying their wealth in the form of costume and bodily adornment. As they became more sophisticated they developed a complex system of ceremonial robes which symbolised the wearer's occupation, and indeed, symbolised the wearer, since each one was individually designed for the office bearer. They were absolutely covered in gold and jewels - must have been terrible to wear!

I borrowed elements from Japan, Elizabethan England, Bedouin tribes. Other societies combined New Guinea, Africa, Borneo etc. One people were totally alien beings, a water race who couldn't bear being on land and whose robes were based on the colours and textures of water. My favourite have been the **Iboriisi,** a savage people, all of whose artifacts can be used as weapons, but who believe that they are peace-loving. They have a vile religion where victims are sacrificed to a bird god in order to predict the future of the crops. I have a gentle, sensitive forest race, and a new desert people who make strange sail-like structures as part of their religion.

My first collection was entirely miniature, robes and jewellery made from handmade and cast paper and paint. It was body ornament, and yet not - the robes were too small and fragile to wear and even if they were big enough, would be too heavy. The jewellery you could wear, though many people found it too confronting. One lady couldn't face wearing a sacrificial victim's necklace, possibly in the magical belief that by wearing it she would become one. The amulets and fetishes I included in later collections were too worrying. All those bones. People seem to hate the idea of bones, of a skeleton living inside them. The fear of death perhaps?

I like the contradictions of ornaments that don't ornament and clothes you can't wear, like all those strange tribal things in museums that you see and cannot believe how anyone could wear them. My recent work includes artefacts, bags, baskets, masks, documents, maps, travellers' records and so on. The robe is still a central image, but I have become less explicit, and in some pieces the culture is only hinted at, rather than clearly revealed.

One of the things I love about the so-called primitive cultures is their use of absolutely everything in their environment. None of this limiting yourself to precious metals, but embracing the lot - buttons, sticks, bones, beaks, moss - whatever seems like a good idea at the time. To a certain extent I too do this. The basis for my work is paper, usually handmade, made from cotton, kozo bark and local plant fibres. I often use commercial papers for backgrounds and for drawings. The jewellery combines paper beads and paper elements cast in plaster moulds, together with commercial beads. I am about to make a series of works of natural basketry fibres, probably Forest People neckpieces. The amulets are made from all sorts of things - etched silk, fibres, bark, canvas. I keep a large collection of objects as a palette to work with: jars of dried bones, beads, threads, plastic. Everything is printed or painted, or sometimes stitched. I also use a wide variety of graphic media: pencil, pastel, oil pastel, oil stick, acrylic paint. I try to maintain as high standards of preservation as possible, and spend a lot of time in research in this area, as well as in the anthropological areas which are my major source of inspiration.

My eclecticism has spread into my own jewellery too. A wool necklace with odd charms that I found at a market has grown and become a sort of interface between my work and my life. People keep giving me things for it - bones, birds' feet, odd things - and it has become a rich and strange artefact from an alien world. I'm thinking of drawing it as part of one of the cultures. I hope this doesn't mean that I have lost all sense of proportion and am losing myself in fiction. If I start sacrificing to the bird god, I shall be in trouble. Perhaps I'll get a tattoo ...

**Inga Hunter**

***Waterpainter's robe - NRAT-TUAN***

***Necklace - NRAT-TUAN***

***He who casts the earth spell robe - IBORIIS***

**Apron: Iboriis, 12th century Post Imperium**

*This is believed to be an apprentice Sun Dancer's apron and is the only one of its kind in the archives. It is known that young Sun Dancers wear small ritual aprons which form part of the ceremonial dress for their initiation ceremonies. These aprons are generally made in reds, browns and oranges - sun-favoured colours; golds and yellows are reserved for adult male dancers. The young boys and girls are kept for some time in a special enclosure in the forest and are rigorously trained in the ritual dances associated with sun god worship. At the actual initiation ceremony the youngsters dance to the god who grants them adult status in return for their gift of stoic endurance. The endurance test takes the form of tattooed sun-patterns on arms and shoulders, a painful experience because the patterns are many and extremely intricate, made with a bone needle and the astringent juices of a special dye plant. The patterns are made on parts of the body which can be covered by clothing - a protection against marauding bird god followers who are only too eager to catch and kill sunworshippers.*

**Sea Creature Necklace: Nrat-Tuan 9th century Post Imperium**

*Although it is not actually stated, this necklace is probably the one worn by the Chanter of the Harvest, the stylised sea creatures are identical to those worn on the shoulders of the Chanter's Robe. The delicacy, length and use of a number of small, separate units is typical of the style of jewellery worn by delegates to*

**Mirror Teller's Necklace: Nrat-Tuan 12th century Post Imperium**

*The pectoral style of neck ornament for delegates to the Court of the Imperium came into fashion in the mid-11th century. This pectoral is worn by the Mirror Teller, the predictor of future events for people - as distinct from everything else, which is done by the Presentimentor. The creature represented is a type of manta ray (this is as close an analogy as is possible with an alien planet). It is not known what the Nrati-Tuan call the creature, but it is fairly certain that it is used in some way to facilitate a prediction. The current theory is that a number of species on the planet have a psionic ability, rudimentary perhaps, and this ability is harnessed by the Nrati-Tuan to augment, or perhaps trigger, psionic ability in themselves. Whatever the case, the creature appears again and again wherever prediction of the future takes place. This is a typical representation of the animal which is always portrayed in silver studded with tiny jewels.*

the Court of the Imperium in the 9th and 10th centuries. In later years the style changed, first to something more like a pectoral and finally, the use of neck pieces, and all jewellery, fell into disuse entirely. Today the use of jewellery is coming back into fashion, but only for arm decorations - the necklaces are becoming increasingly rare and precious, a coveted form of investment among collectors.

***Robe of the Master of the Amphibians: Nrat-Tuan***
***12th century Post Imperium***

*The great amphibians of Nrat-Tuan are bred on the land bridges which mark the divisions between the salt water and the fresh. Amphibians are used for transport, pulling huge reed rafts loaded with freight. Some are bred for their skins and teeth, some are prized for their egg production. Almost all Nrati-Tuan have some sort of amphibious creature for a pet, ranging from tiny water lizards to big alligator-sized herbivores. Nrati-Tuan inhabitants are very close to their animals, being water creatures themselves: able to stay under water for extended periods, needing constant motion and water on the skin, with webbed fingers and toes, hair that is subtle living tentacles, though so human-like that they can, with care, pass for fair, young Irusaqi. The Master of the Amphibians supervises the breeding programs and makes sure that his staff are working responsibly. He or she organises the marketing of amphibious products - a large proportion of Nrati-Tuan economic production, both for home consumption and for export.*

***Robemaster's Necklace: Irusaq (date unknown)***

*The Robemaster of Irusaq can be either male or female and is appointed on the basis of creative ability. It is the Robemaster's task to design the individual robes for all the office holders at the Court of the Imperium. The Robemaster does not wear a robe, but signifies the highly prestigious position by means of a necklace. This necklace always takes the form of the robe; it is a very powerful symbol and is honoured by all. Necklaces vary from a single string with one robe image, to double and sometimes treble strands, with multiple images. The metalworkers of Irusaq are famous throughout the Imperium and the Robemaster's necklaces are typical of their work. Beads from Irusaq are traded all over the Imperium, turning up in valued jewellery as far away as Iboriis and Nrat-Tuan.*

# an expression of stained glass in Australia enchantment

REVIEW

The naturalists Solander and Banks, one pane of the Captain Cook window installed c.1874 at Cranbrook, a residence at Bellevue Hill, Sydney, now Cranbrook School. This photograph is used on the front cover of the book.

Stained glass has always exercised a special enchantment and brought a sense of luxury to viewers. The use of this kinetic jewellery, forever moving and changing in the sunlight and seemingly imbued with its own incandescent life force, adds a visual splendour to any architecture, public or domestic. As the medieval church builders knew, it also carried its own luminous messages and it could be a potent part of the spiritual experience. One does not think of Australia as being a particularly rich source of stained glass and yet we apparently have many beautiful, fascinating and quite unique windows.

Now a new book has been published which explores our heritage of stained glass. The book is written by Beverley Sherry and photographed by Douglass Baglin. It is a most seductive book. Like an adventure story, the gems of glass are discovered. You can feel the anticipation as we move to enter the building and experience the radiance of a new window and the story behind it. We are guided with clarity by Beverley Sherry into the art and craft and social structure of their background. Then, in many instances, the windows themselves are revealed with the aid of Douglass Baglin's photographs. The journey of discovery charted in this book took them eight years. It was worth it.

Baglin is obviously a highly skilled photographer who understands the dynamic qualities of stained glass. His photographs are brilliant and the Sydney publishers, Murray Child, have done justice to the colour reproductions in this well produced, large format book.

This is a well researched book written with authority, but it is her conspicuous love of her subject that makes Sherry's writing interesting. She reads the language of glass and translates it with eloquence. After reading the book you want to rush out immediately and see these windows in the flesh, as it were. You've been won over by an expert and infected with her enthusiasm.

Of course, much of the really splendid stained glass is religious or celebrates the State or the Monarchy, but Sherry has also gained admittance to many private houses and we are able to share rarely seen glass. We are also forced to think again about much of the glass available to the public. I have regularly attended concerts in the Sydney Town Hall since childhood and this book made me realize that I had never properly looked at the stained glass there. In defence, the concerts were at night and without the sun there is no real magic. Sherry talks about the essential role of the sun in glass.

It is inevitable that European perceptions would have dominated the stained glass of both the Church and the State in our heritage windows, but one of the heartening and delightful signs is just how much of Australia is reflected in these windows.

There are numerous Captain Cooks, often looking like someone out of a fairy tale or an old morality play. There are wonderful examples of Australian flora and fauna. We can see a rose window of Australian wildflowers or a blazing panel of waratahs. Australian glass abounds in kookaburras and kingfishers, possums, kangaroos and numbats and at every turn there are flocks of sheep. Sherry introduces these examples, always informative and

always conveying her own pleasure in the work.

There has been a modern revival and there certainly seems to be a future for stained glass. Australia's modern glass is often inspired. Australian artist Leonard French has created windows that glow with barbaric splendour and other wellknown artists, such as Robert Juniper and Charles Blackman, have also created interesting windows. Sherry shows samples of this modern trend.

One of the most stunning sets of modern windows I have seen is at the Araluen Art Centre at Alice Springs. With the encouragement of the founding Director, Jonah Jones, the stained glass artist Cedar Prest created a series of windows using the paintings of Aboriginal children. They are both vivid and appropriate and in the bold simplicity of their forms they live and glow with the shapes and colours of the desert. This series is included in the book.

The National Trust is presenting a touring exhibition in conjunction with this book. Titled **Kaleidoscope: A Celebration of Australia's Stained Glass,** it will travel throughout Australia over the next few months. There will be actual examples of stained glass, working drawings and Baglin's fine photographs are being presented as transparencies with specially prepared light boxes to approximate the effect of the windows.

**Nadine Amadio**

**Australia's Historic Stained Glass**
Text by **Beverley Sherry**
Photographs by **Douglass Baglin**
Published by *Murray Child,* Sydney
$79.95

**BROKEN HILL, WINTER**

All night I have heard the bitter westerly
whipping the clouds across the stars;
now a bleak dawn leaks light on the Silver City,
Stone Town on the broken spine of the Barrier,
with its streets named for ores and halogens
and hard-handed Cornishmen the earth devoured.

Hard town in a hard country, where the wind
is a living thing whimpering at night
in stony gullies and played-out shafts;
where the mines disgorge three times a day
bent-shouldered men, reeling with fatigue
from willing the roof to hold, the props to stay.

My dead father learned his hardness here,
as all the burrowers do in the cold earth
where the unforgiving deeps swallow the weak;
in the floodlit tombs the sermon of stone
is murmured by the timbers, the walls speak,
teaching that a man is measured by his silence.

Awake still, I brood on that passionate man
who learned too well the catechism of the deep
and died, his love unutterable to the last.
Now in the dawn I revolve his death in my mind,
schooling myself to bear my grief alone,
to make my public face a mask of stone.

**Tony Scanlon**

***Reinis Zusters:*** *Big Game, diptych 152cm x 152cm, oil on board*

***Alison McMillan:*** *Detail from The Ghost of Pearlfishers, 50cm x 108cm*

## ACT

**BEN TRUPPERBAUMER:** Sculpture (wood and bronze) from 3 November to 24 December at *Cuppacumbalong Craft Centre, Narek Galleries,* Naas Road, Tharwa ACT 2620 Tel: (06) 237 51116 Cuppacumbalong continues adventurously and busily with not only craftspeople and clients, but flooding river, snakes in the front garden, broken water pumps, wild pigs on bush walks, long-stay overseas guests and with resignation we continue to say 'that's life in the country!'

## NSW

**ANDREE FRANÇOIS:** 'Figurative Illusion' from 19 November - 3 December at the *Airport Hilton,* 20 Levey Street, Arncliffe 2205 Tel: (02) 597 0122

**TEXTILE-FIBRE FORUM: FOUNDATION FORUM '92** - This major conference, now held annually, is the tenth for the *Australian Forum for Textile Arts (TAFTA).* To be held in Mittagong NSW, 20-26 April '92. Workshops, seminars, slide talks and evening activities. Send SASE for brochure: TAFTA, PO Box 192, Mittagong 2575

**FREDA SURGENOR** (realistic watercolours), **COLLINA GRANT** (pastels) and **ALLAN FIZZELL** (traditional oils) from 8 - 17 November at the *Von Dorff Gallery,* 280 Rocky Point Road, Ramsgate 2216 Tel: (02) 529 6026

**REINIS ZUSTERS** (Paintings) from 26 October to 14 November; **DOUGLAS HOLLELEY** (Photographs) from 16 November to 7 December; **CHILDREN'S BOOK ILLUSTRATIONS AND LAUNCH OF VENITA SALNAJ'S NEW BOOK** from 7 December to 2 January '92; on show permanently: Jewellery by **SONDY STANKOV**; and new release of **ARTHUR BOYD'S** latest collagraphs (including a triptych 'The Australian Scapegoat XIII' and 'The Magic Flute', set of four also available individually) at the *Breewood Galleries,* 134 Lurline Street, Katoomba 2780 Tel: (047) 82 2324

**ARTISTS' JEWELLERY: JEAN ARP, JEAN COCTEAU, ANDRE DERAIN, MAX ERNST, PIERRE HUGO, PABLO PICASSO and DOROTHEA TANNING:** Exclusive artist-designed jewellery cast in gold and silver made in very limited edition for Atelier Hugo, Aix-en-Provence, exhibited for the first time in Australia at the *Macquarie Galleries* from 2 - 20 December, 85 McLachlan Avenue, Rushcutters Bay 2011 Tel: (02) 360 7870

**The DESIGN EXHIBITION of NIDA** - The National Institute of Dramatic Art: Features work of NIDA's design students, with emphasis on the work of graduating students - from 15 October at 6.30 p.m. and prior to all performances of NIDA's Graduation plays, at *NIDA,* 215 Anzac Parade, Kensington 2033 Tel. (02) 957 4514

**NIDA'S GRADUATION PLAYS:** 'Serious Money' (a moral satire whose target is urban avarice) from 15 - 19 October at 8 p.m. at the *Parade Theatre;* and 'Tales from the Decameron' (bawdy and often hilarious tales) from 16 - 19 October at 8 p.m. at the *NIDA Theatre.* Enquiries: Judith Johnson Tel: (02) 957 4514

**N.S.W. PORCELAIN ARTISTS' ASSOCIATION:** Exhibition and sale of hand-painted porcelain, watercolour and oil paintings and craft items including jewellery from 2 p.m. Friday, 25 October to 3 p.m. Tuesday, 29 October at *Parramatta Town Hall (No.2 Hall)* Tel: (02) 569 9728 or (02) 636 1303

**PATRICK CARROLL** (Recent paintings and works on paper) from 17 October - 10 November; **TEN GUINEAS AND UNDER** ($1,000 AND UNDER!) from 16 November to 1 December and **THE BLAKE PRIZE FOR RELIGIOUS ART** from 5 December - 5 January '92 at *The Blaxland Gallery,* 6th floor, Grace Bros., Cnr. Pitt and Market Streets, Sydney Tel: (02) 238 9390

**PRO HART, HOWARD STEER, HUGH SCHULZ and others:** 'The Overbearing Lode' from 18 September - 26 October. An exhibition of eleven Broken Hill artists exploring the effect of the mines and mining life. **WILLIAM PASSLOW** (Paint and mixed media): 'A Bit Sus' from 1 November - 30 November. Feral pigs eat lambs, knock down crops, damage fences and watering points; they are also efficient carriers of exotic livestock diseases. Passlow records the grisly experience of working for the CSIRO shooting feral pigs as part of their management program. **CATHERINE WOOF:** 'Fabric of the Universe' from 6 December - 18 January. Large and finely painted works in brilliant colours describe the planets and moons in space juxtaposed with mundane domestic objects. At the *Dubbo Regional Art Gallery,* 165 Darling Street, Dubbo 2830 Tel: (068) 81 4342

**EILEEN FARRAND** (Ceramist) and **MERRILYN HAREN** (Wearable art) from 18 - 27 October at the *Coach House Gallery,* Molong 2866 Opening night admission $10 includes a fork supper: Bookings Tel: (063) 668260 and (063) 668181

**FIONA CRAIG:** New watercolour and pastel paintings - Australian landscape and native flora - October-December; **ART DECO COLLECTION:** Exclusive, stunning jewellery, 1920s and 30s objets d'art, collectables, art books - October-December at the *Alexander Gallery,* 3 Station Street, Wentworth Falls 2782 Tel: (047) 57 2230

**FIBRE ARTISTS OF THE HUNTER** (Mary Beeston, Claire Cosh, Rachel Frecker, Kathryn Grushka, Marta Herbertson, Di James, Mandy Janus, Linda Landers, Robyn Roe, Marie Wallbridge and Selina Weeks) Regional galleries travelling exhibition: 'Contained Uncontained' - these mixed media pieces were born of a love of fibre and have proved vehicles for the artists to challenge their conceptual and expressive boundaries. From 17 October - 24 November at *Manning Regional Art Gallery,* Entertainment Centre, Pacific Highway, Taree North Tel: (065) 510555

## QLD

**RITUAL OF DECORATION** from 30 October - 20 December 10-4 Mon-Fri at the *Crafts Council of Queensland,* 1st floor School of Arts Building, 166 Ann Street, Brisbane 4000 Tel: (07) 229 2661

A selling display of high quality craft objects ideal for Christmas and the unique works range from serial production pieces to one-off studio pieces in wood, ceramics, glass, metal and fibre, including silks, leather and paper.

## SA

**ZONES OF LOVE:** Contemporary Art from Japan, from 20 September to 3 November at

# CALENDAR

the *Art Gallery of South Australia,* North Terrace, Adelaide 5000 Tel: (08) 207 7000 - Exhibition of works in various media of ten young to mid-career Japanese artists and includes everyday objects, photography, video, sound, electronic work and Lego blocks.

**RUTH TUCK** (Watercolours) and **GREG DALY** (Ceramics) in October; **DONNA LESLEY** (Paintings) and **JANET BRIDGLAND** (Drawings and Watercolours) in November; and **ALF HANNAFORD** (Paintings) and **PETER COAD** (Paintings) in December at the *Greenhill Galleries,* 140 Barton Terrace, North Adelaide 5006 Tel: (08) 267 2933

**DAME NANCY BUTTFIELD PRIZE EXHIBITION** of the Embroiderers' Guild of South Australia from 31 August - 3 November (Wednesday to Sunday 10-4.30) at *Carrick Hill,* 46 Carrick Hill Drive, Springfield; **NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE EXHIBITION** of the Embroiderers' Guild of South Australia : 9-10 and 16-17 November at *Old Government House,* National Park, Belair. Enquiries Tel: (08) 234 1104

## VIC

**ROBERTA ELLIOTT** (November) and **ROBIN THOMAS** (December) at *The Robb Street Gallery,* 6 Robb Street, Bairnsdale 3875 Tel: (051) 526990 Original graphics, paintings, sculpture, silver and ceramics.

**MELBOURNE'S LOUNGEROOMS** - A Sense of Place: Photographs by **Vivienne Mehes** and **PORTRAITS** - The Women and Men of Gippsland: Photographs by **David Turpin** from 7 October to 2 November at *Sale Regional Art Gallery,* 288 Raymond Street, Sale 3850 Tel: (051) 44 2829 Contemporary photographs which reveal the diversity of Victoria's population.

**THE STORY SO FAR** - Contemporary Australian artists including **VICTOR MEERTENS, DAVID KEELING, TIM MAGUIRE, DALE HICKEY** and **CHRIS SNEE:** curated by Jim Logan and Peter Timms, from 22 September to 20 October; and **GUAN WEI** (Contemporary Chinese Artist) and **OSWALD HALL** (Melbourne Surrealist) from 24 October to 1 December at *The Exhibitions Gallery,* City of Waverley, 170 Jells Road (Cnr. Jells and Ferntree Gully Roads), Wheelers Hill 3150 (Melway map ref: 71 J10) Tel: (03) 562 1569

**ROS AULD** (Ceramics/Works on Paper) and **FRANCES JONES** (Recent Painting) from 7 September - 28 October; **AMAZING TEAPOT SHOW** from 1 - 26 October; and **PETER RUSHFORTH** (Ceramics), **ROLF BARTZ** (Ceramics) and **MEG BENWELL** (Recent Paintings) from 29 October - 23 November at the *Distelfink Gallery,* 432 Burwood Road, Hawthorn 3122 Tel: (03) 818 2555

**ELAINE PULLUM** (Ceramic Sculpture): 'Endangered Species and Animal Spirits' 3-15 December, Tuesday-Sunday, 10-5, at *Blackwood Street Gallery,* Blackwood Street, North Melbourne 3051 Tel: (03) 329 9966

## WA

**ALISON McMILLAN:** 'Alice in Westerland' (Stained Glass and Glass Constructions) from 29 November to 18 December at *A-Shed for the Arts,* Victoria Quay, Fremantle 6160 Tel: (09) 430 4733

**WILDFLOWERS IN ART** - Flora of Western Australia from 20 September - 1 December; and **IMAGES OF WOMEN** from the Robert Holmes à Court Collection, from 19 September - 10 November at the *Art Gallery of Western Australia,* Perth Cultural Centre, Perth 6000 Tel: (09) 328 7233

**CUSTOMS HOUSE ARTISTS** in collaboration with Fremantle Arts Foundation from 24 October - 17 November (25 October evening); **STEWART SCAMBLER** (Ceramics), **JAN HILL** (Works in Paper) and **PENNY YOUNG** (Watercolours) from 21 November - 15 December (22 November evening); and **PAUL MONCRIEFF** (Works on Paper), **VAUGHN RICHMOND** (Wood) and **TOM GIBBONS** (Pastels) from 19 December - 12 January '92 (20 December evening) at *Fremantle Arts Centre,* 1 Finnerty Street, Fremantle 6160 Tel: (09) 335 8244

**MERVYN BISHOP:** Impressions of Bishop; **HAL MISSINGHAM:** A Close Focus; and **South West College of TAFE Art Lecturers'** Exhibition: **Directions** - from 20 September - 27 October. **SOUTH WEST PRIMARY SCHOOLS ART EXHIBITION**: Building a Brighter Future - from 20-27 October. **HOLMES À COURT COLLECTION:** Contemporary Aboriginal Art; and **SOUTH WEST HIGH SCHOOLS ART EXHIBITION:** Vision 91 - from 1 November - 8 December. 3D **DISCOVERY:** Scitech Art & Science Show; **THEO KONING:** The Boat Paintings; and **BUNBURY CITY COLLECTION** - from 13 December - 19 January '92 at *Bunbury Art Galleries,* 64 Wittenoom Street, Bunbury 6230 Tel: (097) 217423

*Tell us about your exhibitions and other events and we will list as many as possible in the* ***CALENDAR*** *of our next issue.* ***Closing date:*** *Friday, 8 November 1991.*

***Above:*** *Morning dip with Mac, watercolour*

***Below: Andree François:*** *Paddo*

***Below left: Andree François:*** *Don Giovanni*

# the sculpture of Anish Kapoor

Exploring the lower level of the Art Gallery of New South Wales in recent months the visitor is confronted by a remarkable and incongruous sight - a cluster of monolithic stone boulders. From a distance, the four coarse eroded forms arise like an outcrop displaced from an inland Australian desert, or instead evoke primeval artefacts transported through time from an early pre-civilized age. However, closer inspection reveals that each piece contains a deep hole which exposes a dark void within. The heavy physical presence of the sculptures is in fact illusory: inside they are hollow and weightless. So begins an interplay between volume and void, matter and spirit, presence and absence, the ancient and the modern, which is characteristic of the work of **Anish Kapoor.**

The sculpture entitled **Void Field** (1989) is one of the latest works the Art Gallery of New South Wales has purchased for its contemporary art section. It adds to a carefully acquired collection by artists considered to represent the current avant garde in international art, including **Anselm Kiefer, Richard Deacon, Christopher Le Brun** and **Jannis Kounellis.**

Kapoor, an Anglo-Indian artist, arose to prominence in the early 1980s under the banner of the New British Sculpture movement. His reputation as an eminent figure on the European contemporary art scene was consolidated last year when he was selected as the British representative at the Venice Biennale and won the *Premio Duemila* award for best young artist. He has since held his second exhibition of works on paper at the Tate Gallery in London earlier this year and has his sculpture housed in many state museums throughout Europe and America.

During a brief visit to Sydney to install his four boulders, the artist discussed the philosophy underlying his work. He also took the opportunity to journey into inner regions of Australia, including Broken Hill and Alice Springs. An intense and animated man of strong beliefs and convictions, he spoke passionately about his experience of the Outback. Inspired by its powerful ambience, Kapoor asserted that the desert intensifies 'one's relationship with the vastness, with the earth'. This relationship is

one of the themes which pervade his artwork. His affinity with the Australian interior extends to a strong interest in Aboriginal art and culture. He also admires a number of contemporary white Australian artists such as Ken Unsworth and Tim Johnson.

Kapoor's striking sculptural work was first viewed in this country as part of The British Show which toured state galleries nationally in 1985. In 1987 a collection of his drawings was also exhibited in Sydney at the Ray Hughes Gallery.

Whilst a talented and prodigious draughtsman, Kapoor is best known for his sculpture. He reacts against the commonly held assumption that although painting evokes the illusory space beyond, sculpture can only deal with the physical 'here and now'. In his sculpture he therefore wants to address the metaphysical 'beyond'.

Kapoor's aesthetic philosophy has evolved out of a culturally rich upbringing. Born in Bombay to an Indian father and Iraqi Jewish mother, he moved to England in 1973. The simple, biomorphic forms that he employs are inherently spiritual, drawing on his background in Hindu mythology and Hebrew mysticism, as well as Jungian psychoanalytic theory. His artwork suggests an attraction towards the absolute and the sublime in the traditions of romantic philosophers such as Hegel and Burke.

Following on from the abstract expressionist painters before him, particularly Barnett Newman, he is concerned with returning to the primal moment of being. This theme of genesis recalls the birth of the cosmic order in which the first creative act denoting the beginning of life is the act of separation - of light from darkness, space from matter. This division into two polarized yet complementary states of existence is seen in Indian Tantric philosophy as male and female. Such binary elements are fundamental to Kapoor's imagery and form the basis of his cosmology. His forms often resemble mountains, the mountain being a place of spiritual presence and communion. It implies for the artist both the phallic shape representing the deity Shiva, or in its internal caves, the vaginal orifice of the goddess Kali. Kali is revered as both the good and terrible mother. The hollow voids

in Kapoor's boulders thus play out the tensions between death, darkness and birth. They act as a source of creation and destruction, comfort and fear, a place of enlightenment and refuge and a 'horror vacui'. According to the artist, it is only by addressing these dualities that one can achieve a sense of wholeness and completeness.

The archetypal images that he draws upon which, in addition to the mountain and the void include the vessel, the tree, fire and water, also revive Jungian ideas of the collective unconsciousness. In this theory, hidden within each of our psyches are universal, primal archetypes which are trans-historical and arise regardless of race, culture or social background.

Kapoor intends the viewer to have a direct response to these archetypal forms. Whilst the sculptures reflect his own desire to look inward and to know himself, the artist also argues for the impersonal, for the step beyond hand and manufacture.

This approach has invoked scepticism from critics for creating pieces that demonstrate a sequential uniformity. The Sydney Morning Herald art critic John McDonald considers this latest work 'more industrial than transcendental'. Kapoor would argue that his attempt to make sculptures that appear to exist independently of their maker follows on from the tradition of minimal artists such as Ad Reinhardt and Robert Ryman. He intends that the works should appear 'unmade, as if they had always been there': self-created objects still in the process of evolving. Kapoor asserts that through impersonal imagery the artist can leave enough space for the viewer to fill with him or herself. He encourages a type of psychological projection which stimulates a sense of self-discovery within the spectator: 'You (the viewer) make the story, you finish the work ... you enter the scene; in a sense you find yourself.'

In earlier pieces colour has played an important role in Kapoor's sculpture. He often applies raw, powdered pigments to his sculptures which saturate the works and remove any trace of the artist's hand. The forms are sometimes made out of wood or cardboard, occasionally directly from pigment. In this manner, he works against the common trend of truth to materials. Rather he wants to suggest the immateriality of apparently solid materials, suggesting the dissolution of matter into spirit.

He attests to the spiritual power of colour, affirming that colour can provoke emotions and have a physical presence: 'Colour is stuff... colour is direct emotion; a thing within rather than a thing applied.' Only vivid primary colours are used in his work which he considers to have 'a bigger reality than weak colour'. Red is often predominant with its associations of flesh, fertility and earthly life, whereas blue is taken up for its transcendental, cosmic qualities.

Kapoor nevertheless discourages the interpretation of his work in terms of purely symbolic elements, as he feels that this approach is too simplistic and limiting and avoids engaging with the works on a wholistic level. In addressing this problem, he makes parallels with viewing Aboriginal art in which he argues: 'How do you enter their experience without reducing it to this means this, that means that... one cannot divorce Aboriginal artworks from the song, the dance, from the whole.'

Anish Kapoor contests the modernist notion of a utopian universe existing 'out there'. Instead, he is in accord with the eastern view of the utopian ideal as something internalized. In his art he tends to use the female body as metaphoric of this desire to turn within; the female orifice is a gateway to the interior world. He sees the feminine as an energizing force and the source of creativity. For this reason, Kapoor regards his creative self as being feminine. He also associates the feminine with spiritual experience. The artist looks back to primeval myths which revered an all-powerful female Creator. According to Kapoor, with the advent of modern civilization, the 'great masculine adventure' of discovery and progress has undermined this feminine power or adopted it as part of his own mythology. He comments: 'One could say that much of masculine culture has been an attempt to make male the great female mystery. The whole idea of the menstrual cycle as a kind of regenerative, recurring process. The idea of renewal taking a cultural form in the process of making wine into blood, bread into flesh. It's as if it is a culturalizing way of making the male feminine, of making him partake of her mystery. It's in that sense that I see the feminine, not as a kind of latent nature but as a very active nature in a continual process of death and rebirth.'

These transformational qualities inherent in the woman's cycle are elements evident in Kapoor's work. His sculptural objects are often alchemical in nature, suggesting the transferral of energies - from the terrestrial into the spiritual, earth into sky, radiance into darkness and the interchangeability of the masculine and the feminine, of positive and negative forces.

In the Creation myth as expounded in the first verses of the Book of Genesis, the simplicity of the symbol acts in inverse proportion to the immensity of that which is being symbolised. So it is with Anish Kapoor's sculptures that their elemental structure belies the underlying complexity and multiplicity of meaning. The artist is nevertheless adamant that the works remain experiential rather than conceptual. The organic nature of the forms are physically 'earth-bound' yet through the evocation of universal archetypes are suggestive of the eternal mysteries of life.

Kapoor's attempt to grapple with not only his own path of self-discovery but to uncover in aesthetic terms the primordial spiritual forces fundamental to all humanity is a courageous task. His works are visual testaments to the need for the individual to look within. In a progressively materialistic society which tends to impede spiritual development, this is perhaps a message of which we should all take heed.

**Victoria Hynes**

# CAN THE ARTS BE UNIONISED?

DISCUSSION

The idea of a union award governing creative output immediately suggests conflict. How can the artist be confined to an eight hour working day? How could the poet be expected to turn off his poetic muse as the clock strikes five? And how indeed could the craftsman put aside his clay or turn off his kiln as the whistle blows?

And yet why should all artists of whatever persuasion, painters, musicians, writers *et al*, be expected to live in poverty and in fact to be the principal supporters of the arts instead of themselves being supported?

The image of the artist living in an attic, working by a dim light, emaciated and hungry, is romantic and persistent. So is the suggestion that hardship and suffering produce works of genius.

There is no doubt that some artists have produced works of genius under impossible conditions, but the fact that this has happened does not preclude the possibility that they may have produced a much greater body of work had they been well fed and housed, and been given access to the materials they needed for their work.

The **Artworkers Union (NSW),** a small union established some ten years ago, is prepared to seek funds to commission a research proposal to find out where artworkers stand in today's society. With the assistance of the **Crafts Council of Australia** and the **National Association of Visual Arts** they are seeking research into:

'1 *Remuneration and valuing systems pertaining to the work of visual arts and crafts practitioners within the visual arts/craft industry and related industries. An analysis of these systems will require a clear and detailed exposition of the range and nature of visual arts and craft practices, the artist's labour process, art markets and arts industry infrastructures.*

2 *Industrial representation - with an examination of the options for the visual arts/craft industry taking into consideration the nature of the labour processes of cultural work.*

*Determination of the need for a more organised industrial relations system for the visual arts/craft industry. Analysis of structural options both presently and in the future including the viability of implementing such options and the resources required.'*

The draft proposal has been prepared by Susan Reid, Toni Warburton and Catherine Rogers of the policy and planning committee of the Artworkers Union.

Susan Reid, in talking about the research project, points out that no-one has as yet articulated and described the artist's labour process.

'What is actually done? Where is it done? How often does the artist work and for how long? Unless these questions are answered, unless the processes of art can be tracked and described, informed decisions cannot be made. So many decisions about artists are made from an emotional point of view.'

The Artworkers Union feels that there is a great deal lacking in resource material about artists. They want to find out what industrial options exist which would be of most benefit to artists. They are seeking the ideal scenario, which may be amalgamation with a strong union or the establishment of a professional association.

Unions such as the **Operative Painters and Decorators,** which seeks to include artists, certainly have a strong voice and a legal structure, but some artists fear that they, as a small band of creative people within a large industrial structure, would simply be lost.

**Helmut Lueckenhausen, President of the Crafts Council of Australia,** and an industrial designer who creates extraordinary furniture, has doubts about the value of unionism for artists. 'I'm not opposed to unionism itself. I accept its value and strength and admire the historical struggle, but I'm not sure it's right for artists and craftspeople to join particular unions. Some of us have had very unfortunate experiences working on jobs where we have had to pay a union ticket holder to stand beside us doing nothing, just so that we could be on the site.

'And I am not sure whether the artist craftsman wants to be involved in adversarial bargaining. We have to face the fact that all artists are involved in the cult of 'I - me.' We are all about individual ideas and effort. I personally like the idea of brotherhood and sharing but I'm not sure that industrial unionism has any part in the life of an artist.'

At the same time he sees that the artist is not well served by society.

'There are always eager young artists who are prepared to work for very little just so that their ideas can be seen. They have the right to expect that after

these early sacrifices they will be paid well in later years. But it is rarely so. The exploiters in society turn to the next generation of eager young idealists who will work for very little.'

It is this kind of thing that has always troubled artist **Vivienne Binns** who has been involved for years with the Artworkers Union and has only recently resigned as Vice-Chairman of the National Association of Visual Arts.

'All those kind of reasons - exploitation, and the need to come to grips with the myths about art, prompted my involvement.

'I wanted to get rid of the notion that artists were just wankers and that the arts were not linked to economic values. On the one hand the arts are exploited as objects. Take for instance the works of dead artists which are seen as valuable commodities, with no thought being given to the irony that the artist lived his whole life in poverty. There is such a contradiction in society. The artists are seen as being unimportant, particularly in times of recession, but in times of political upheaval when authoritarian governments come into power - the artists and writers are the first to be gaoled. It is such a massive contradiction.'

Vivienne feels that most arts organisations have suffered from a lack of willingness to come to grips with a lot of the practical, social and political problems of artists.

'It is time to get a sharper awareness of the underlying lack of recognition of the rights of artists. They have virtually no recourse in law. Few specialist lawyers are available to help. Most artists are deeply embedded in a 'no hope' situation. They have no substantial economic arguments to support their rights against misuse of their work. Sculptors see their work destroyed as buildings change and have no voice to protest.'

Vivienne Binns has had thirty years of experience in the arts, often as an artist in the community. She worked for a while in an enamelling plant in Geelong, exchanging her artistic viewpoint for the tradesman's knowledge of photographic silk screening techniques.

'An awareness of the industrial side of the arts dawns slowly. I had no idea, when I began as an artist, of the dangers of enamel and asbestos. Now safety in the workplace is a big issue.'

Vivienne sees gains and losses in the amalgamation of a small union such as the Artworkers Union with a large industrial union. 'We would lose the freedom and ease of being small and flexible, but we would gain political clout. It is the same thing with contracts. A contract protects the artists from those who would do them wrong, but contracts destroy the trust and co-operation of the honour system, such as I have had for thirty years with Frank Watters of the Watters Gallery in Sydney - where loyalty, friendship, trust and sensitivity are used in place of contracts.

'But artists generally need help. So often they work to supplement their incomes as part-time teachers. Part-time teachers are the worst off of all the teaching profession. So again the artist seems to be in a no-win situation. I realise that unions won't automatically solve our problems - but no-one will do anything for us unless we fight for it and educate people to think differently about artists. Only then will we get the emphasis right and get a fair deal from our profession.'

The Operative Painters and Decorators Union has been successful in negotiating Artworkers State Awards in Western Australia and Victoria, where they have achieved a 2% budget allocation on all new and refurbished buildings above a certain value, for the purchase of Australian artworks to be used on the site. They are seeking to establish a similar Artworkers State Award in Queensland where they are supported by another small union, the Queensland Artworkers Alliance.

The state awards read strangely to those accustomed to the vagaries of the artist's life.

It covers (in Western Australia) all persons 'engaged in painting, applying paint or its substitutes or any preparations by any means including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, plastic relief work, paper hanging, decorating, graining, marbling, varnishing, enamelling, gilding, lacquering or spray painting and whose work is primarily artistic in nature and purpose.'

The trade is 'artworker' and many and varied are the benefits, covering everything from annual leave, through sickness and overtime benefits, to maternity leave and long service leave and including protection against toxic substances and confined spaces.

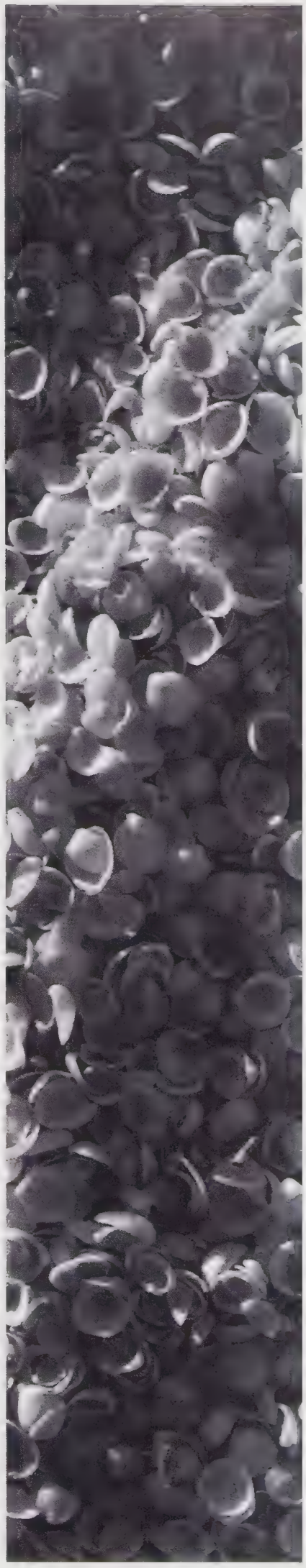
If these awards do become universal in Australia they will provide some surprises for employers and employees in the generally free and easy world of the arts.

**Jeff Hamilton,** a stained glass artist and employer in the leadlight industry, wrote of his adventures in unionism as *'A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Work One Day'*. He found that his workers were covered by the Glass Workers (State) Award which required him among many other rules, to have a copy of the Worker's Compensation (Summary) Act on display at all times, to pay into a Builders Workers Industrial Union Compensation and Superannuation Scheme for all of his employees, to work only a 38 hour five day week with every 20th day a rostered day off, and to keep his records ready at any time for the inspection of a Union Organiser. Jeff wrote his article to alert other glass workshops to the award, but there is an underlying sense of surprise in his words.

Artists through the ages have relied on patronage for their existence. They still do - but there can never be enough grants to cover the needs. Is it time for them to become 'artworkers' and to demystify their role in society?

**April Hersey**

# Kate at the camel fair



Kate Llewellyn's travels in India and Italy are described in her new book **Angels and Dark Madonnas.** In this excerpt, she leaves New Delhi to visit the camel fair at Pushkar.

My tent, in the morning, glows rose and ruby. The tiny exquisite pattern (this must be classical and probably has a name), moves and changes kinetically as I stare. It is endlessly beautiful. It's like sleeping inside a kaleidoscope. The tent is round and has an octagonal top which comes to a peak. It is about fifteen metres across and twelve metres high. The moon shone through a small window flap as if Mother India were checking all were sleeping. Like the night nurse's torch, she woke me up for her satisfaction.

At dusk I walked out to the desert: well, it is all desert really, but where the tents cease desert sands, empty of everything but camels and men, begin. After that, nothing. The sun, a red, orange and pink burning one, dropped like a bucket on a rope into a well. From the sand rose a mist like a fume as if it were breathing out with relief at night coming.

In the dining tent, the many poles were wrapped with saffron yellow ribbons. Above, zigzags of red, white and yellow pattern the whole ceiling. On the walls hang the vast cloth murals I told you of. Everything is beautiful, exotic and bedazzling. It's regal, mediaeval splendour. Truly, if one woke in heaven in a tent it would be like this.

The food is very good. It is all vegetarian and in this heat I think it's just as well.

We are camped on sand outside the little town of Pushkar. This is a dry town in more ways than one. No alcohol is allowed at all. Not anywhere. No holding hands or kissing in the street, either. That bit is not a problem for me. In this dining tent, glorious as it is, filled with coloured light filtered through the walls, the best of Indian environment and food combines with efficiency, so none are kept waiting. All guests file past four or five separate sets of buffets.

Among all this, at lunch, a table of German tourists had their group photograph taken by one of their number, eating at the white-clothed table. Nothing else of the tent was represented. Some people would take photographs of boots in heaven.

After breakfast I went and had a chat to the driver and his bus driving friend who he's met up with here and talked about when we might leave. I still think I won't go to Jaipur, though most of it is safe, they say.

Stephanie and Vassi walked up the path between some tents last night. We met like friends. They'd gone by train to Jaipur before coming here. The city is filled with soldiers but it was peaceful, except for the old part.

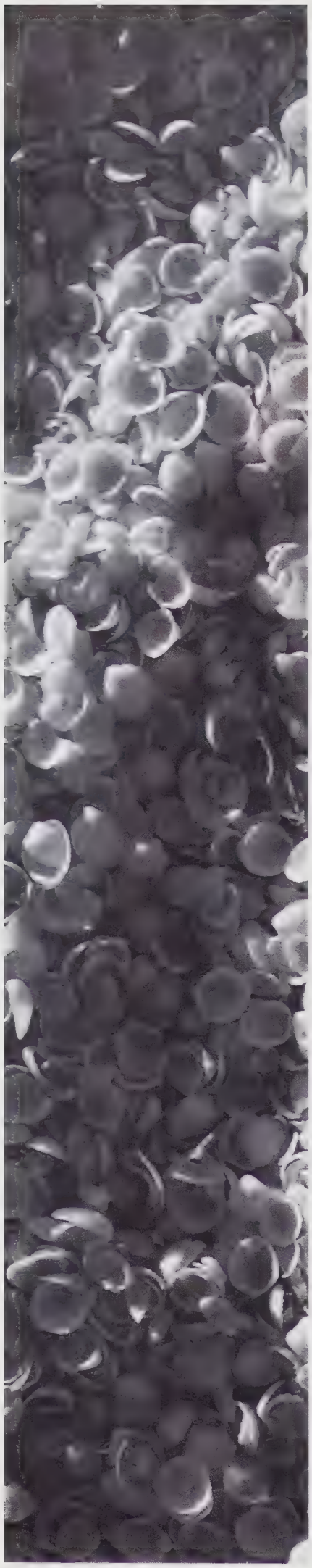
Today I walked into Pushkar. There are rows of shops in shanty dwellings by the roadside. In one a man and a young woman squatted opposite each other, an anvil in between. They beat a block of red-hot iron alternately. The young woman, in a pink sari, used an iron hammer, which she lifted above her head each time she struck. He had a different instrument. I paused to watch and saw beside them another young woman squatting, quietly bringing up her breakfast in the sand. It was plain the work and heat had made her vomit. She wiped her mouth and I walked away.

She reminded me of Caro who, like all her team of rowers, could only row on an empty stomach. Harsh work makes women vomit if they've eaten. Men too, I think.

A shopkeeper said, 'Madam, we are dying'. I asked what he meant. He said, 'Look', motioning to a half-empty street. Because of the riots people have stayed away in their hundreds and even the camel owners and camels are fewer than other years.

A naked orange-painted holy man sat in the street. Both legs seemed to have been put on back to front. At first I thought it a complicated yoga pose, but saw that it was not. Well, I don't think it was.

Thinking the lake away in the opposite direction of the tent camp, I was surprised to see water through an archway. I asked if I could enter, took off my shoes as was suggested, and went in. Women were bathing in their saris. They'd push the scum and debris aside and pour and swish the water



down on their heads. It is a holy lake, and four hundred and fifty temples, all white, surround it. A priest of sorts beckoned with a dish of pink rose petals to me. He led me to the water. (You can take a horse to water...) He asked if I had grandparents. Well, we all have those, one way or another. I understood, or perhaps misunderstood, we were to pray for them or their souls, perhaps. He daubed his finger in some ochre dust piled on the silver dish, and smeared it on my forehead. He put some on my hands and scooped up water to them. Motioning I should cast the petals to the lake, I did as he suggested. I was wondering, to be frank, just how much all this was going to cost me. Smeared with paint, I squatted there beside the lake, he tossed up water with his hand into my eyes. I did the best I could not to recoil or to wipe my face. Let's say that was a struggle. I didn't really wish to pray for my dead grandparents. If, in fact, they were whom I was blessing in this ceremony, I'd rather pray for health of living relatives. I wanted to say, 'Friend, I am mainly interested in the living. Unlike you, I believe the others have passed beyond my care'. Although who would guess that I'd think like that? After all, I've given little evidence of it in my own life. Twenty-five years the widow, yet never the bride.

I gave him some money, slunk away up the steps, barefooted past the defecating cow tied in the archway. After this trip I'll need fumigating. Ideally, I'd like to crawl into an autoclave. Or jump into a sheep dip.

Walking on past the race track with its pink stands and white entrance and walls, I stood aside to let an elephant, laden with green branches and a man on top, amble past with its endearing walk, comprising a lifting up of its feet and flinging them gently backwards at each step. There is something very childlike about it, perhaps, and that is why it is so touching.

A young dark brown angry camel came jibbing down the path. Hobbled, recalcitrant; crying in despair or fury in its unbrokenness, I couldn't tell. 'Camel, the pain diminishes when one stops fighting. It is often so for us also.'

Let me tell you about the most wonderful thing. Last night I ambled over, after dinner, to the sound of music. There I saw a show equal to anything at the Edinburgh or Adelaide festivals. Rajasthani artists danced and sang and gave a puppet show. Two women in pink and silver saris sat dancing with their hands on hips with lighted candles on their heads while musicians played. They were grace itself and while modest to a high degree, were also very, very sensual.

Three women, beribboned and bedecked in every colour on their deep black skirts and tops, veiled in black silk, danced and sang. Did the two main dancers have cream pearl caps beneath their veils? I couldn't tell, though I strained to look. From time to time the youngest held up her veil and in a bewitching gesture turned her head to one side, smiled, dropped her shoulders, twitched the veil back and proceeded, dancing. It was a most curious step she used, a sort of sideways leap and skip combined, and this too was entrancing. A sort of jubilant, youthful, joyous skittle, then a leap, as if overcome by exuberance. Flashbulbs exploded every time she twitched and lifted that black surprising veil. Around their ankles they wore bells that rang out as they stamped and leaped. Then, in a spinning dance, they twirled and twirled like black striped spinning shining tops. I was very taken with this concert and most especially with the youngest black veiled dancer. I wonder what her life is like? Embroidered black clothing under moonlight is sensationally glamorous.

This morning when the sun came up men were cooking breakfast in the sand beside their camels. I stood and watched a while, hoping it wasn't rude. A hole was dug about one-third of a metre deep. In this, a fire was lit from cow pats and bits of dry bamboo and wood. A boy attended it. The man had a big tin dish with about two kilos of ground millet. He had two silver dishes. One dish held the grain. In one half of the big dish he poured some water and began to mix and turn with his hands. He kneaded the mixture, made two balls, patted out with a deft movement. I can't remember just what it was, but not as we would do it. On to the small hot dry plate above the fire he dropped this pancake. After a few minutes the boy turned it over with the handle of a silver ladle. The man continued mixing and making. The boy put another cow pat on the fire. When the chapatti was done on both sides, he lifted it, put it on the sand as if into a toast rack, facing in towards the fire to keep it warm, and leant it on the end of a piece of wood poking from the fire.

The fireplace, I have to tell you, wasn't a simple hole. It had an entrance to it like a burrow. The hole just dipped down from this a few inches at one end. It was wonderfully efficient and used hardly any fuel, and didn't blow out in the wind. The sand had been tamped down after water had been put on it.

As I stood watching the cooking, a small girl with a blue frock stood beside me with a dish of fresh camel or perhaps goat dung on her head. Goat dung, I think. Yet I haven't seen any goats. She had earlier been inviting me to her home and asking for chocolate, of which I had none.

As I write, tourists on camels are riding past because it's getting cooler. Taped Indian music is blaring through the wall from the publicity tent next to this. Arrivals are discussing bookings and directions. A man is blowing a desert horn somewhere out behind me. Someone's bejeaned legs, carried dangling from a cart, are disappearing through the huge straw decorated gate. A big white car has pulled up. A man, all in white with a red-and-green spotted turban, is banging a brass gong, and somewhere near him where I cannot see, drummers and people with cymbals are playing. It's a sort of throbbing exciting hypnotic music. It could be either very boring or very besotting, I think. There is very little variation in it. It seems very optimistic and volatile. I could possibly riot, given enough of it. I have to go and have a cold shower.

The dust, while not really unpleasant, makes my nose run.

Reader, if this seems fractured and haphazard to you, there is a reason. It is a bit like living in a circle with lines horizontally and vertically moving up and down and sideways all at once. Below that circle there are others, and to see it and think and write lucidly with a calm contemplative rigour is not easy.

***Pushkar***

*1 November*

The full moon at four this morning hung over the edge of the desert. Only a cough from time to time punctuated the Indian music still being broadcast from loudspeakers in the distance. The camel men sleep beneath or beside their pneumatically-tyred carts. For bedding they use what I am given, which pleases me to know. They have a cotton quilt beneath them on the sand and one above. The quilt is called a *raza*. I have crisp sheets, that's the difference, and a bed made of an iron frame with strips of canvas across. Here, I think, comes my camel for the morning ride. Many pretty ribbons round the neck. The camel's not my own, you know, just rented. No, it seems this one was not meant for me.

I have sneezed half the night. A teenage boy is sweeping the carpet here with some twigs lashed as a broom. Dust rises in a desert storm.

Last night, 1040 people were catered for in the giant tent. Only a ten-minute queue before each was served. Now who says Indian people can't get it together? Dessert was a huge cake of cream rather like a trifle, perhaps. The waiters sliced it and the guests helped themselves. Well, it wasn't just one cake. They brought one out each time it was necessary. A metre by half a metre was the size. Today for lunch 1500 people are expected and an extra hundred for dinner.

*Later*

Well, I've been to town on the camel. Camel riding, I think, could lead to much haughtiness. No wonder those sheikhs look the way they do. In Delhi after certain events I felt I could pass down the river of people like a queen on a dhow. But nothing, in my opinion, can match a camel for a feeling of dignified elevation. One rides between the land and sky in a movement of loping grace. As in an aeroplane, earthly petty matters fall away as one looks out. But some matters, not petty at the time, did affect me. Staying on, for one thing. The man leading the camel wanted to sit down with some friends he met in the camel camp as we passed by. I asked him not to, as I knew from getting up that getting down would be full of problems. As I had risen with the camel beneath me, sweat broke out all over my body. The sheet on which I sat had hand marks of sweat from then on. But it was a marvellous experience.

I wanted to take some laundry into town. I had wondered how I'd get my ironing done. Well, I saw laundries in the town. Only a tiny shelter, but an iron with coals in it is always in these laundries. But though we went close to the place we turned back for the camel man's own reasons. (You know, what I want to know is how did Daisy Bates get her laundry done? She wore gloves in heatwaves.)

We passed rows of false teeth and gruesome implements laid out on cloths on the earth. The dentist. Or was it the prosthesis maker?

The camel was decorated not with ribbons, as I had thought, but with a sort of candlewick of pink, yellow and teal green. Teal green is a colour Rajasthanis seem to love. The women often wear big wide skirts of this topped with a scarlet veil that covers their heads and bodies to below the waist. The camel's candlewick strips were interrupted with silver-framed tiny mirrors and white oval beads.

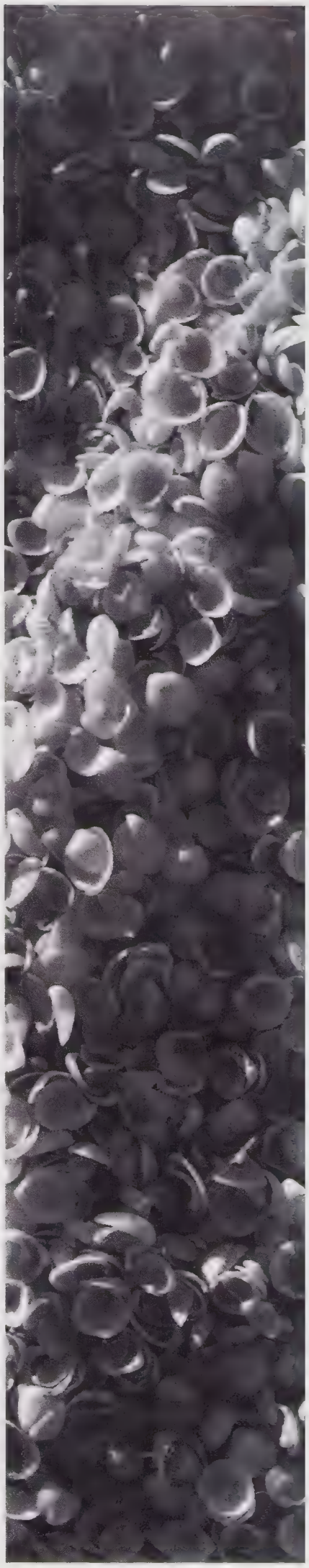
Crossing the stadium grounds a man rode a wild camel, snorting, skittering, baulking and racing ahead. We were in their path. More sweating. It was like watching a brown cyclone coming towards one. It was so courageous of the rider. He sat there, this fury under him and in his heart determination and even perhaps joy that come what may, he would win. And I suppose he did. If you had a peg through your nose, you too, I guess, would finally give in. As he tore towards me I wondered what was Hindi for: 'Will you please lead my camel out of their path?'

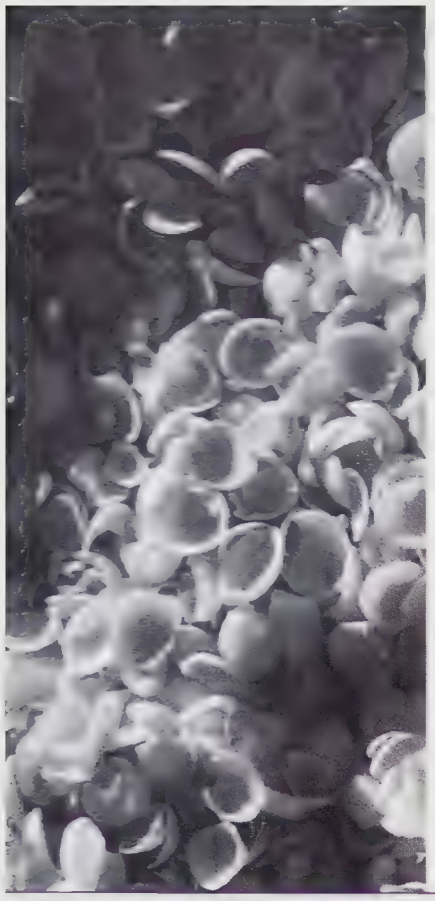
As we passed through the camel camp, an old man was painting and decorating his camel from a small silver dish of black paint. A boy held the camel's head steady by thrusting his fingers up its nostrils. Children ran beside my camel begging in various degrees of vague amusement, pathos, melodrama, hilarity and vague hope. It was all wasted. I hung on far too hard to be tossing money in my wake.

It is bedlam here; Indian music belting out from the tent next door, and a young complaining French couple stand in front of a man at one of the thirty or so desks, furious at the quality of their tent. They have complained to three men separately so far. All that is said in reply is there have been no other complaints before this. (Why is it that people so often say that ... what comfort or relevance has that to the complainant?)

Men are booking in parties of tourists. The cacophony continues. The French pair continue the long discussion. It reminds me so much of the trouble I had at the Imperial Hotel. I told that tale about a dozen times to men who seemed to be going to take some action or to need the information. I might as well have shouted down a drain.

The Frenchman is now standing quietly stroking his chin contemplatively; almost worn down, but not quite yet. The pretty girl, her hair mimicking the children's crawling out from hessian shelters in the desert, is permed and teased out from her head almost parallel with the horizon. It can't be combed, as the style





does not permit it. (Among these desert children, mothers sit from time to time, picking vermin from their hair. In the streets, too, people groom each other in this way, sitting on a low wall or squatting on the earth.)

An orange satin flag waves above a green and yellow tent. The flag is the colour of the sun at dusk. Next to it waves one of pure white satin in the pale grey blue sky.

And now I have an appointment to see the kitchens. The man who seems to be in charge told me at breakfast yesterday I could have a recipe, if I wished. I said then and there that I would write while he spoke. But instead he preferred to write it. He has a diploma in catering from Salzburg. All I can say is he and Salzburg have proved a tremendous combination. I am filled with admiration. And here it is, just as he wrote it down on the notepad I drew from my bag.

***Vegetable Rolls***

*Recipe*

*Take boiled vegetables like Cauliflower, Peas, and Potato. Mash together and add pinch of white flour (cornflour) add salt, pepper, tumeric as per choice also put Ginger Root in it. After the paste is ready give the shape of Rolls to this paste by hands and put each Roll in Bread crumbs. Then deep fry them for about 15 mts. and then take them out from the frier. Serve hot with tomato ketchup and Garlic paste.*

Well, I've been to see the kitchens. I was too early, though, and Mr. Sukesh Saxena, he who gave me the recipe, didn't wish to show me for another three-quarters of an hour. I must go to Delhi and it is seven hours from here. So I strolled around the back and saw them. A vast open-air kitchen. Men washing up in white tiled sinks set in the sand. Piles of plates drying on the rugs laid out covering the sand. Men were squatting in one part peeling vegetables, putting them into vats bigger than preserving pans. Each vat was a metre wide. The charcoal was piled in a big heap. Rubbish bins were dug into the sand. Everyone was cheerful and called, 'Ullo. Ullo'.

'Good luck with lunch', I say. Fourteen hundred to sit down to table would make any number of chefs and managers grow pale.

I went again last night to the concert and took the driver and his friend the bus driver. They were cooking a meal beside the wheel of the bus when I walked over to invite them. We had a chat, too, about leaving this morning, and what time might be wise and safe. Recklessly we settled on ten o'clock, because I had the appointment to see the kitchens before I left.

And now Delhi, God willing.

**Kate Llewellyn**

**From Angels and Dark Madonnas - Travels in India and Italy,**
*published by Hudson, 1991*

**The Scribe's Daughter**

*the oldest known book, a book of psalms, was found at al Mudil, Egypt, in 1984*

When his daughter's life
flowed away from her
in the rivers of her first blood
the scribe of al Mudil
waited for night
and carried her body in secret
beyond the oasis
to a pauper's graveyard

The moon trembled in its fullness
spilling light
over a desert suspended in silence;
he knelt to dig her grave
working against the wind
his hands stained with his life's work.
Four hundred and ninety parchment pages
sewn with leather and bound in wood
made a pillow for her head, the ankh he'd carved from bone
attached with leather threads
mingled with her hair

Fixing her face in his memory
the scribe of al Mudil
closed her lips
on the songs
of prophecy, penitence and praise
and followed Mark's footsteps
across the desert

**Debbie Westbury**

*from Mouth to Mouth, Five Islands Press*
ISBN 0 9587972 5 0

# DESIGN

REVIEW

Although there has been increasing importance being placed on 'design' in recent years, particularly in industrialised nations searching for the value-added product, there has not to date been much significant theoretical research on this subject. Perhaps this is because design has been regarded merely as technique? Not so, argues John Thackera, an experienced journalist and critic who has compiled **Design after Modernism** from writings by seventeen well-known Europeans and Americans. 'Design is not a neutral tool; it is a planning activity whose aims and procedures are dictated by commercial and political interests.'

Thackera opens by considering **design and modernism.** We are evidently living in a new era, now being described as postmodernist and characterised by a loss of confidence in the concept of 'progress' and by a significant shift in the nature of production and consumption. American critic **Frederic Jameson** sees this as the disappearance of a sense of history (we have 'begun to live in a perpetual present and in a perpetual change that obliterates traditions'). It is a period in which we experience what French sociologist Jean Baudrillard describes as an 'ecstacy of communication', the explosion of information, ideas and images as a consequence of the development of mass electronic media.

New movements tend to discredit what they replace and Thackera attempts to correct the misrepresentation of modernism that has already begun to develop. Modernism as an art movement must not be separated from the social and scientific changes of its time which formed the context in which it evolved. The ideals now claimed by postmodernism (cultural pluralism, openness to change and enthusiasm for the new) were also once central to modernism at certain times in its development.

An overview of the development of modernism is provided in the essay *'The experience of modernity'* by American writer **Marshall Berman** who here distills many of the ideas of his book *All That is Solid Melts into Air.* Berman refers to the writings of Rousseau (who was the first to use the word **'moderniste'** in the way that we have come to use it), Marx and Nietzsche, to give us a feeling for the rich complexity and contradictions of the modernist movement. Berman argues that while 20th century modernists focused on style, their 19th century predecessors used modernity as a framework for the major questions of modern life - such as the purpose of cities, how people can live together and what they want from their environment.

Thackara has grouped the essays according to the three main areas in which he considers debate is beginning to occur: **the city, the product and technology.** It would be impossible to summarise every essay, so I will touch briefly on representative examples from each section.

The first essay focusing on the city is *'Place-form and cultural identity'* by architectural historian and teacher **Kenneth Frampton.** Having come of age as a practising architect in the early 1960s, Frampton watched disillusionment with the modernist style grow, as high rise blocks sprang up in cities all over the world, not in response to the needs of communities but according to optimum returns on investment. He proposes what he calls 'critical regionalism' - that a more sensitive and relevant form of architecture be found on the periphery of the so-called developed world, rather than in the centres, where architects and their clients have developed a local expression, consciously cultivating 'culture of place'.

It is an indication of the breadth of this book that the essay *'Street signs'* by architect **Nigel Coates** takes the opposite point of view. Well-known for his innovative shop designs in Britain and Japan, Coates celebrates the contradictory aspects of the modern metropolis and expounds his theory of narrative architecture.

In *'The city is not a tree'*, architect **Christopher Alexander** calls for a better understanding of the diverse interactions which occur in a city. We are used to seeing patterns without overlap, like a tree, says Alexander, but what we must try to comprehend is the complex semi-lattice which more accurately expresses the interactions of the many systems operating in a city. Only then can designers achieve a city of humanity and richness rather than one of compartmentalisation and dissociation (where, for example, the elderly are segregated in retirement villages).

The second section, of particular interest to me as a craft practitioner, deals with **the product.** In *'The search for a postmodernist aesthetic'*, English cultural critic **Peter Fuller** argues passionately for a return to ornament, suggesting that the strength of the work of William Morris and Charles Ashbee stemmed in fact from their ability to resist the onslaught of modernism and the machine. As a strategy for the future, Fuller advocates a return to nature for inspiration. We should look to the hither reaches of modern mathematics where researchers such as Benoit Mandelbrot are developing a new family of shapes called fractals capable of describing the irregular and fragmented patterns around us.

Oddly, **Peter Dormer's** piece *'The ideal world of Vermeer's little lacemaker'* is the one with which I have the most to quarrel, although of all the writers he has had the closest connection to craft, having curated numerous exhibitions and written three major surveys: **The New Ceramics, The New Jewelry** and **The New Furniture.** Dormer revives yet again the familiar head-hand debate. Because, like Vermeer's little lacemaker, craftspeople can 'lose themselves' in their work, there is no room for questioning of assumptions or innovation. It is not clear why Dormer considers this concentration more similar to absorption in gardening or painting a door than to comparable stages in the development of a painting or sculpture. It would appear that by the term 'crafts' Dormer really means production work, the throwing of a series of pottery mugs, for example. Where then do we fit all the one-off

craftworks which he has showcased in his surveys?

Dormer states that what is 'art' is decided by the art world, so without the acceptance of the art world the concept of the artist-craftsperson has no currency. Yet one of the developments of postmodernism has been the dismantling of the old hierarchies. It is no longer sufficient to quote past dominance as an effective argument for current practice.

Dormer proposes that craftspeople confine their efforts to the production of functional wares which are familiar and acceptable domestically. This is a path which poses its own challenges. Anyone who has watched the development of the work of potter **Gwyn Pigott Hanssen** over the years can see what this approach can achieve. Her search for perfect form within the ceramic tradition parallels the formal concerns of contemporary sculpture.

My argument is with the limits which Dormer sets. Where he draws a line between art and craft, I see a continuum, from traditional craft practice to the experimentation of the leading edge. Dormer documents with scorn the experimental work in craft, where he chooses an extreme example of potters dunking their heads in liquid clay and sitting around while it dried! Like all other art forms, the crafts are constantly evolving. Play with materials has been only one stage in development. Most recently we are seeing a more probing enquiry into the meaning of the object itself, as for example jewellers' current questioning of the concept of the wearable.

Dormer does propose the linking of crafts' expressive use of materials with industrial design, so that originality may be introduced into the manufacturing of everyday objects. This is certainly an area which has been explored already with some success.

The section on **technology** opens with a sociological examination of *'The system of objects'* by **Jean Baudrillard** and studies of the fundamental shifts in the structure of industrial production by **Philippe Lemoine** and **Thierry Chaput.** Of particular interest to the crafts is British engineer **Mike Cooley's** piece *'From Brunelleschi to CAD-CAM'*. Cooley traces the separation of designing from doing since the 16th century. He contends that the architect and the stonemason working on a cathedral were roughly equal in knowledge. Separating theory from practice over the centuries has precluded access to much-needed intuition, subjective judgment and tacit knowledge. In this age of computer-aided design, we may be about to repeat the mistakes of the past. Cooley advocates the development of interactive computing and human-centred systems in both skilled manual work and the design activity.

This book is dense with ideas and should be read in its entirety. Personally, I should have liked it to have included something from groups such as **Common Ground** in the UK whose projects focus on the vernacular form or the exponents of **Green Design** with their views on the designer's moral responsibility for the environment. But John Thackara has provided us with a much-needed opening of the debate - let the debate continue.

**Beth Hatton**

**John Thackara** (editor) **Design after Modernism,** London, Thames & Hudson, paperback $26.50

# LETTERS

**Dear Reader,**

The launching of the first issue of a brand new magazine is a very exciting time for those involved - and a dream come true for me.

Our aim is to create a completely different type of national arts magazine reflecting the activities and abilities of a large scattered population with the most diverse interests and talents of any people anywhere.

The 'arts' are really indefinable and they are made substantial in the incredible creativity which you see all around you in Australia. They feed and stimulate each other and we want our magazine to be the meeting place, the melting pot, the forum... the shady place under a gum tree on the bank of a creek where you dream and scheme and have visions of what you want to achieve. For that to happen, we need more than just a wide variety of articles and opinions - we need your input too, in the form of suggestions, opinions and information about your activities wherever you are.

Subscribers to Oz Arts will receive a regular newsletter with their magazine, with special offers, discounts and invitations and opportunities for us to meet - at launchings, workshops, openings, master classes etc. And even if you live too far away from these events or are too busy to attend, include us in your life by telling us of your local 'arts'-focused activities, or by joining in the grapevine which is already growing around the magazine. Send us your letters, exchange your services and pass on information through our Calendar or in our Classifieds.

In these sophisticated times, a beautiful and elegant publication is a must, especially if it is to do justice to the creative abilities of our clever and talented people, but this doesn't mean that it shouldn't also be funny, provocative and newsy. We've set the ball rolling, now it's over to you!

**Carolynne Skinner**

# BRIEFS

## THE AUSTRALIA GALLERY

Australia has a firm foothold in **New York** at the **Australia Gallery** which opened its doors twelve months ago at 98 Greene Street in the heart of Soho.

**Kate Flynn** is the very Australian director of the gallery, in partnership with American businessman Howard Rower who is such an Australiaphile that he has bought a property near Alice Springs.

Kate is a child of Arnhem Land, having grown up on cattle stations there - one of which, Coolabah, was 8,000 square miles in extent. Aboriginal art was just part of her childhood, something she saw being created all about her as she played with the Aboriginal children in the nearby camps.

She has studied anthropology and the history of art at New York University, but she finds she can always draw on her inherent knowledge of Aboriginal art to guide her as she curates her exhibitions.

The Australia Gallery is not only for Aboriginal art, although Kate Flynn tends to have more exhibitions of Aboriginal art than of other contemporary artists. She recently had an exhibition of romantic landscapes featuring the 'visionary landscapes of Leslie Kingsley of Tasmania and the fine miniatures of Gerald Jones of Canberra'.

Kate has just had a six weeks tour of Australia to look at the work of master craftspeople here and is planning a major exhibition of Australian craftworks at the end of 1992.

She feels that the American market is opening for Australian artists and craftspeople.

'Americans are very interested but it will probably take a few years yet before they build up a good knowledge of our art. Art collectors in America were very quick to notice Aboriginal art. Many began collecting in the 1940s, before Australian collectors became interested. 'I am sometimes offered early bark paintings at the gallery. If they are significant I always try to get them back to Australia. I offer them to Australian museums. I am very interested in promoting Aboriginal culture in New York and the gallery has a small reference library where students can work, but I don't want to see Australians lose any of their heritage.'

## AUTUMN IN KYOTO

The 15th Asian Assembly of the **World Crafts Council** and the Asia Pacific Crafts Conference will be held in Kyoto from November 26th to December 1st 1991.

Kyohei Fujita, President of the Japan Craft Council inviting delegates and 'many people in the craft world' stressed the beauty of Kyoto in autumn, 'the most colourful and authentic season of a city with more than 1200 years of history'.

At the last World Crafts Council held in Kyoto so many craftsmen and women crowded into the ancient city that even the temples were filled and Japanese sleeping mats were side by side on every available floor.

There will be an exhibition of Australian craft at the Museum of Kyoto.

## THE THIRD AUSTRALIAN CONTEMPORARY ART FAIR

Although it is still almost a year away, **Jonah Jones,** Director of the Australian Contemporary Art Fair is well ahead with arrangements.

He has interested more European and American galleries to take part in the fair which will be held in the Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne from 1st to 4th October, 1992.

The fair will provide a sampling of paintings, sculpture, drawings, prints, photography and tapestries from more than 75 leading galleries, both Australian and international. Visitors can view and buy the work of 700 prominent and many new artists - all available under one roof.

Various forum and seminar programs are to be run in conjunction with the art fair, addressing issues relevant to the contemporary art scene.

Anyone wishing to contact Jonah Jones about the fair will have to look for him in Melbourne as he has moved from Sydney and is now at 15-21 Macarthur Place, Carlton 3053.

## FABER-CASTELL AWARD

This year's award of $7,500 for a professional artist's drawing was awarded to **Stephen Eastaugh.**

He offered '6 anguished erotic, surreal forms isolated on crumpled pages'. They reflected the artist's responses to travel in 40 countries over the last ten years and were described as 'intensely personal and bizarrely funny'.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Faber-Castell National Drawing Award.

Arthur McIntyre who judged this year's Faber-Castell award, said that the company now has one of the finest collections of local contemporary drawings in Australia, acquired over the past decade 'including works by Lanceley, Leach-Jones, Borgelt, Waller, Archer and a host of others'.

Airbrush portraiture. Mark 1.

# BOOK REVIEW

With the release of his latest novel, **The Second Bridegroom, Rodney Hall** travels even further along the new creative path he set out on in his last book, **Captivity Captive.** This path is taking him to the forefront not only of Australian writing, but also of international writing. It is not surprising that a leading German newspaper *(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung)* reviewing **Captivity Captive,** claims: 'he ranks with Garcia Marquez'. While retaining his own unique vision, Hall is able to evoke a comparable sense of lyrical imagery, of intense inner love, of mystery and of mythology that makes a novel such as **Love in the Time of Cholera** haunt the memory ever afterwards.

In **The Second Bridegroom** Hall has written an extraordinary new kind of fable, a semi-historical tale that operates on many levels of reality and imagination. Within the impeccable lucidity and clarity of the structure, there are qualities of wild poetry, of psychological insight and a gripping sense of drama that holds the reader spellbound. It is rather like hearing a master of Indian music, who, within the framework of a strict traditional scale, will improvise music of daring, invention and potent economy and stir in the same listeners the most profound emotional response. Hall's very language has that quality of controlled improvisation that creates new scales of meaning and a fresh sensuous imagery.

**The Second Bridegroom** is told by a youth who has been sent as a convict to Australia. He is an apprentice printer and his crime is forgery. Born on the Isle of Man, he claims he is a simple boy. He has innocence but in fact he is a clever and ingenious boy already touched with the love of poetry and the power of myth.

The document he forges with a rare authority was written in 1487. It concerns a variant of the myth of the Great Goddess who, in many guises in many countries in pre-Christian times, took a summer and a winter husband, each dying or fading to be replaced by the next. Eventually these rituals were overcome, chaos was outlawed and the patriarchal religions of inflexible order took over. Hall has his youth aware of the delicate balance of the environmental, social and psychic power that has been lost. 'There will be no end to wars until a second bridegroom brings back the peace.'

There are many implications tied to this powerful myth and many levels of meaning. The exiled youth is to explore within himself and within the new and yet ancient country he arrives in, new perceptions of civilization. Another kind of mythology unfolds for him, complete with murder and chaos, ecstatic beauty, awareness of the invisible world and 'the menace of magic'. In his swift journeys backwards and forwards in time, new entities are formed and new meanings for love and fear engendered.

**The Second Bridegroom** is, in fact, the first novel in a trilogy. The trilogy ends with the already published and acclaimed **Captivity Captive** and Hall is currently working on the missing middle novel to be titled **The Grisly Wife.**

Hall says of the middle novel, due out in 1993: 'It is about a Protestant Mission of women and is told by a woman whose husband is a prophet. She's got a good story to tell. But with her, things are not always what they seem. She has a very different voice to the others.'

There are a number of themes running through the trilogy. There is most strongly the theme of place and of the beauty and mystery of the Australian landscape. Each novel takes place in the same area, each a neat thirty years apart, so **The Second Bridegroom** is set in 1838, **The Grisly Wife** in 1868 and **Captivity Captive** in 1898.

The three novels are written in the first person, the first and the last by men. The tales are told in very different ways and with very different perceptions and evoking richly varied imagery. **The Second Bridegroom** is beautifully written and told with a rare poetic insight. One of the important themes in these works is the nature of language. For Hall the language is a celebration.

Another theme is 'life after death'. Without divulging any plot surprises, it is part of the 'timeless' quality of these novels and also of the way they flow so easily backwards and forwards in time. When asked does he have any personal feelings or some secret knowledge about 'life after death', Hall grins and says: 'I know nothing, it will all be news to me'.

Hall, who for many years has been a full-time writer, was recently appointed Chairman of the Australia Council. This prestigious position was ready to be occupied by a major creative figure and Hall has arrived at a crucial time when the necessity for change will need a creative vision to renew it. It will also make heavy demands on his writing time. The position, registered and incidentally salaried, as a one day a week employment, is in fact virtually a full-time occupation. While it is entirely appropriate that the Australia Council should be headed by a creative artist, and one understands Hall's wish to make a real contribution, it is to be hoped, in the light of Hall's stunning new developments, that he will still have sufficient time to write.

**Nadine Amadio**

The **Second Bridegroom** is published by *McPhee Gribble.*

"I've got a couple of ideas for a novel but that would probably mean having to go to bloody London to collect the Booker...."

# MUSIC

REVIEW

## THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS

***'What a day, what a day,***
***For an auto-da-fe!***
***It's a lovely day for drinking***
***And for watching people fry!'***

One would hardly have believed that **Candide,** by the prodigious and highly irreverent eighteenth century French writer **Voltaire,** would have been a suitable subject for an opera/musical, but the volatile and brilliant **Leonard Bernstein** decided it was his cup of tea.

The wickedly cynical book, banned everywhere when it was published in 1759, has lost none of its cerebral sting in the witty modern words and lyrics. Bernstein has created a dazzling score, inventive and exuberant and full of his usual catchy melodies. Just as naughty as Voltaire, Bernstein plunders the whole classical repertoire, sending it up deliciously.

It was then 1956 and Bernstein was in full flight. **Candide** appeared on Broadway but was not the popular success it should have been. **West Side Story,** written the following year, was an instant and lasting triumph and yet they are both equally musically brilliant. Perhaps a satire on overblown optimism was not as immediately appealing as a story of tragic love.

**Candide** was to go through an extraordinary and enormously complicated history before the bubbling charm and the real art under the cynicism finally won hearts. Like many good things, it was before its time, or perhaps, in the implications of its satire in America in the immediate post McCarthy age, too close to its times (the Auto-da-fe number a case in point). It was painfully revised more than six times and finally came to a state of completion in 1989. Bernstein died last year so what we have now is the definitive version.

Deutsche Grammophon have just released a superbly performed set of this final version with Bernstein himself conducting the London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus (released in Australia by Polygram: 2 compact discs 429734-2). Bernstein brings a warm and vigorous sense of theatre to this performance with his usual balance of indulgent nostalgia, manic moments and showbizz elan. The grandeur of the LSO in all its glory in the big numbers is seductive. The sound of the orchestra is generally good and at times really splendid.

There are high moments as Bernstein hurtles his way into the overture and later into the dreamy delirium of *The Paris Waltz* and the send-up of *You Were Dead.* The Auto-da-fe scoring which often sounds like a mixture of Bizet and Milhaud is another high spot. *What's the Use,* near the end, is a clever cast song that seems about to burst into a very familiar pop song at any moment. This is archetypal Bernstein and we are fortunate to have his version on disc.

The singing is really excellent and as usual the satire is much more effective when well sung. June Anderson brings an attractive coloratura to her role of Cunegonde. She is absolutely delightful in her noble *Glitter And Be Gay,* that witty mixture of Mimi's death scene with moments of **The Merry Widow** and perhaps a touch of Lucia's mad scene!

Jerry Hadley has an appealing vocal presence as **Candide.** Together in *You Were Dead* ('weren't you clever to survive' - a touch of the Rosenkavelier here), they are quite beguiling.

The turgid tango, *I Am Easily Assimilated,* is handled smoothly by that fine artist Christa Luwig. She teams again superbly with June Anderson in the polka, *We Are Women.*

By the end of **Candide,** the philosophy has been turned upside-down! The cast have ditched the best of all possible worlds and in a rising chorus have come to the belated and conspicuous conclusion that they are 'neither pure or wise or good' and decide quite touchingly to live with their imperfections.

In today's age of black comedy, the witty and sparkling **Candide** is poised ready for a whole new life as a re-found cult musical. This fine new recording should be the very electricity to switch on the movement.

**Nadine Amadio**

# CLASSIFIEDS

**THE HAMILTON DESIGN GLASS GALLERY** is still in Lane Cove, Sydney, waving the flag for contemporary Australian studio glass from 9.30-6 Mon-Fri (5 pm Wed) 10-4 Sat: 156 Burns Bay Road Lane Cove Tel: (02) 428 4281

**PSYCHIC COUNSELLING** especially for artists - find help and direction for personal and professional problems - phone (02) 516 4229

**EASTERN SUBURBS POETRY GROUP:** Meets monthly on Friday evening. Poetry lovers and writers read their poems, discuss ideas and meet for a convivial evening with refreshments. The group provides a relaxed atmosphere for experimentation, constructive criticism and testing out of poetic ideas, alternating between members' homes in Sydney. There are plans to publish an anthology. The group is available to interested groups and institutions who would like to listen to some very stimulating poetry reading. Contact Merlyn for further information (02) 389 3041.

**HOW TO PUBLISH YOURSELF!** by Michael Woodhouse - the invaluable Australian reference book for producing and selling family histories, poetry, newsletters, magazines and novels. Tells how to research, write, design, typeset, print, bind, distribute, promote and sell. Written for the non-technical reader, its emphasis is on value-for-money production. $9.95 plus $1 P & P 288 pages 135 x 200 mm paperback from Elephas Books, Reply Paid AAA33, 361 Orrong Road, Kewdale 6105

**THE WRITING HOUSE** Peace and quiet in rooms overlooking vineyards and distant mountains. Meals and services provided. Close to good library. Write to Oz Arts magazine if you have such a place to let. A classified ad here will put you in touch with just the people who are looking for a 'creative retreat' such as this.

**HOW TO BE NORMAL IN AUSTRALIA** by Robert Treborlang - a practical guide book to the uncharted territory of antipodean relationships. Secrets of normal Australians revealed. Tiptoe through the minefields. Grimacing for beginners, the Australian wedding, how not to worry, etc. $6.95 plus $1 P & P 96 pages 135 x 210 mm paperback from Elephas Books, Reply Paid AAA33, 361 Orrong Road, Kewdale 6105

**HOLDSWORTH GALLERIES,** 86 Holdsworth Street, Woollahra 2025 Tel: (02) 363 1364 - Representing major Australian artists with changing exhibitions every three weeks. Gallery hours Monday-Saturday 10-5, Sunday 12 noon - 5.

**QUILTS WITH MEANING** Supply your family history, photos, fabric from first party dresses etc. and we will design and make you a unique work of art that will also keep you warm..... An advertisement such as this in the next issue of Oz Arts magazine would certainly attract interest. Do you create quilts or something else with similar artistry and flair? Send your classified advertisement to Oz Arts magazine by Friday, 8 November and it will appear in our next issue.

**CALENDAR 1992** "Organa Europae" with superb photographs of European organs... A must for organ music lovers... Brochure from Treble Clef Enterprises, PO Box 350 North Balwyn Vic. 3104.

**OZARTS: A guide to arts organisations in Australia,** published by Thorpe in association with the Australia Council, is now in its fifth edition. The guide provides information on Australian arts organisations in all fields and includes contact names, membership details and services offered.

ISBN 0 909532710 $39.95.

**VERA HULSCHER'S SPRING ART SHOW:** All October and November at Vera Hulscher's Studio Gallery, 17 Campbell Street, Gymea 2227. Please ring (02) 522 8689 any time.

**MAGNOLIA BOOKS** Mail order books and magazines for the textile crafts. Write or phone for free price list: Magnolia Books, 16 King Street, Balmain 2041 Tel: (02) 810 6639 Fax: (02) 725 5203.

**THE ROBB STREET GALLERY,** 6 Robb Street, Bairnsdale Vic. 3875 Original graphics; paintings; sculpture; silver and ceramics. Advice and assistance in the building of individual and corporate collections. Exhibition times: Friday, Saturday, Monday 11-5 Sunday 2-5 or by appointment only Tel: (051) 526990.

**MAGAZINES** - Subscribe to Threads, Fiberarts, Ornament, Weavers, Knitters and others. MILLHILL BOOKS Montville 4560 Phone (074) 429333

**CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING** in Oz Arts magazine costs $1 a word, with a minimum charge of $20. Let us have your advertisement for our next issue by Friday, 8 November. Complete the form in this issue and send it with your cheque or include your credit card details and mail or fax it to: Oz Arts magazine, Private bag 5, Wentworth Falls 2782 Tel: (047) 57 4001 Fax: (047) 57 3797.

### OVERSEAS READERS

Australians abroad and other overseas readers who are interested in the Australian arts scene are able to obtain copies of Oz Arts magazine at the following bookshops and galleries. We will be expanding this list in future issues. Subscription requests, however, should be forwarded to our address in Australia (Oz Arts magazine, Private bag 5, Wentworth Falls 2782, Tel: (047) 57 4001 Fax: (047) 57 3797), but individual copies of the magazine (at local price plus postage and packing, should you require your copy mailed) may be obtained by contacting the shops/ galleries direct.

### U.K. AND EUROPE

For copies of Oz Arts magazine and a fascinating variety of new and secondhand books about Australia and by Australians, visit **FLINDERS AUSTRALIAN BOOKSHOP** in London. This extraordinary bookshop is owned by Jim Hunt, a wellknown figure on London's Australian scene. FLINDERS AUSTRALIAN BOOKSHOP, 10 Woburn Walk, London WC1 Tel: (071) 388 6080 (the telephone turns into a fax outside office hours!)

### NORTH AMERICA

Readers in North America will have read our story about Kate Flynn's **AUSTRALIA GALLERY** with interest. Copies of Oz Arts magazine are available from THE AUSTRALIA GALLERY, 98 Greene Street, Soho, New York, NY 10012 Tel: (212) 274 9835 Fax: (212) 226 6604

### LANGUAGES

Summaries in several languages of the major articles in each issue of Oz Arts magazine are included in all issues of the magazine which are sent abroad. FRENCH, SPANISH, ARABIC and JAPANESE-speaking readers will be given a brief outline of each article - enough, with the illustrations, to give them a feel for the content of the magazine and to enable them to decide whether a full translation of a particular article would be worth pursuing.

# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

A study of the former Arts students of the University College of Southern Queensland. Read how a number of talented students working in a variety of different artistic disciplines have affirmed their talent and have shown courage in pursuing their ideals and aspirations.

**Discount price for OZ Arts readers $19.95 plus $3 postage (RRP $29.95).**

Contact:
Cathy, USQ Press,
PO Box 58,
Darling Heights,
Toowoomba
Qld 4350
Ph: (076) 31 2768

***A publication for the budding artist***

P0135/900-48



# TEXTILE

FIBRE FORUM

## FREE
## SAMPLE COPY

'TEXTILE FIBRE FORUM' magazine appears three times a years; each issue is 60 pages long, 2/3rds in colour, making a beautiful publication with contemporary works, some instruction, historical articles, regular columns; covers all the textile arts (for example, basketry, papermaking, lace, weaving, surface design, and much more).

**FREE SAMPLE COPY**

NAME _____ (please print)

ADDRESS _____

**Write today to PO Box 192, Mittagong 2575**

**(You won't be disappointed...)**

The Australian Forum for Textile Arts, Ltd.



**TAKE REFUGE IN AN ISLAND OF YOUR OWN**

**SUBSCRIBE NOW FOR TOPICAL, LIVELY AND HIGH QUALITY READING. ONLY $24/$18 CONC. FOR FOUR ISSUES. SPECIAL OFFER FREE - FIRST RIGHTS; A DECADE OF ISLAND MAGAZINE, GREENHOUSE, $19.95**

**SEND YOUR CHEQUE TO PO BOX 207 SANDY BAY 7005**

ISLAND



THIS CHRISTMAS
GIVE THE ARTS
AUSTRALIA-WIDE
WITH A GIFT
SUBSCRIPTION TO
OZ ARTS
MAGAZINE

A POSITIVE FEAST
FOR THE EYES AND
A GREAT MEAL FOR
THE MIND

# 1992

# A·C·A·F·3

## THIRD AUSTRALIAN CONTEMPORARY ART FAIR

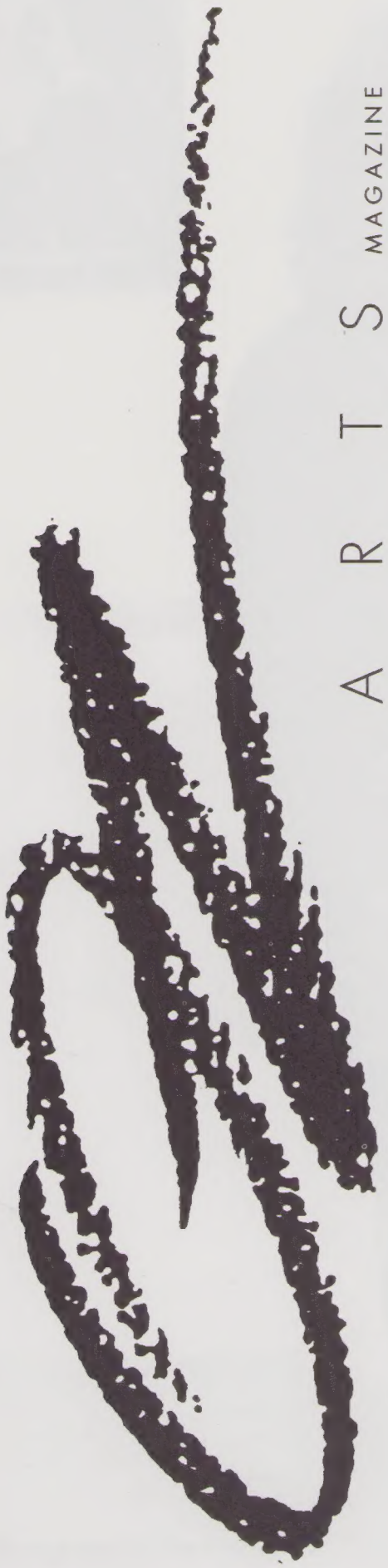
MELBOURNE 1–4 OCTOBER 1992

75 galleries from the Pacific, Europe and North America will attend the Third Australian Contemporary Art Fair in Melbourne in October 1992

Enquiries from Galleries and Collectors:

Jonah Jones Director ACAF 3
PO Box 5004 Carlton 3053 Australia
Tel 61-3-347 5177 Fax 61-3-347 7370

# BOOKMARK



R T S MAGAZINE

A

## SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

MAIL OR FAX (CREDIT CARDS ONLY) TO **OZ ARTS MAGAZINE, PRIVATE BAG 5, WENTWORTH FALLS 2782**
**TEL: (047) 57 4001 FAX: (047) 57 3797**

Please send the next four issues ☐ The latest issue only ☐
of Oz Arts Magazine to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ ☐☐☐☐

I enclose cheque/money order for ☐ $36 (four issues) **or** ☐ $11 (one issue only, includes postage)
***or*** *please debit my*

Bankcard ☐ American Express ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐

Card No: ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

Expiry Date: _____ / _____ Signature: _____

Overseas subscriptions: $48 (surface) $68 (airmail)

## GIFT SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

MAIL OR FAX (CREDIT CARDS ONLY) TO **OZ ARTS MAGAZINE, PRIVATE BAG 5, WENTWORTH FALLS 2782**
**TEL: (047) 57 4001 FAX: (047) 57 3797**

Please send the next four issues ☐ The latest issue only ☐
of Oz Arts Magazine as a gift in my name to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ ☐☐☐☐

I enclose cheque/money order for ☐ $36 (four issues) **or** ☐ $11 (one issue only, includes postage)
***or*** *please debit my*

Bankcard ☐ American Express ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐

Card No: ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

Expiry Date: _____ / _____ Signature: _____

Sender's name: _____

Address: _____

Overseas subscriptions: $48 (surface) $68 (airmail)

## OZ ARTS CLASSIFIEDS AND SMALL ADS ORDER FORM

MAIL OR FAX (CREDIT CARDS ONLY) TO **OZ ARTS MAGAZINE, PRIVATE BAG 5, WENTWORTH FALLS 2782**
**TEL: (047) 57 4001 FAX: (047) 57 3797**

**To Oz Arts magazine**

Please insert my advertisement in Oz Arts for ..... insertions commencing from Issue 2 (publication January '92)
☐ Tick box if you wish to receive a copy of Issue 2 of Oz Arts and add $9 to your remittance.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ ☐☐☐☐

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Cheque enclosed for $..... (minimum $20 for advertisement)
***or*** *please debit my*

Bankcard ☐ American Express ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐

Card No: ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

Expiry Date: _____ / _____ Signature: _____

Photograph: Robert Turnbull